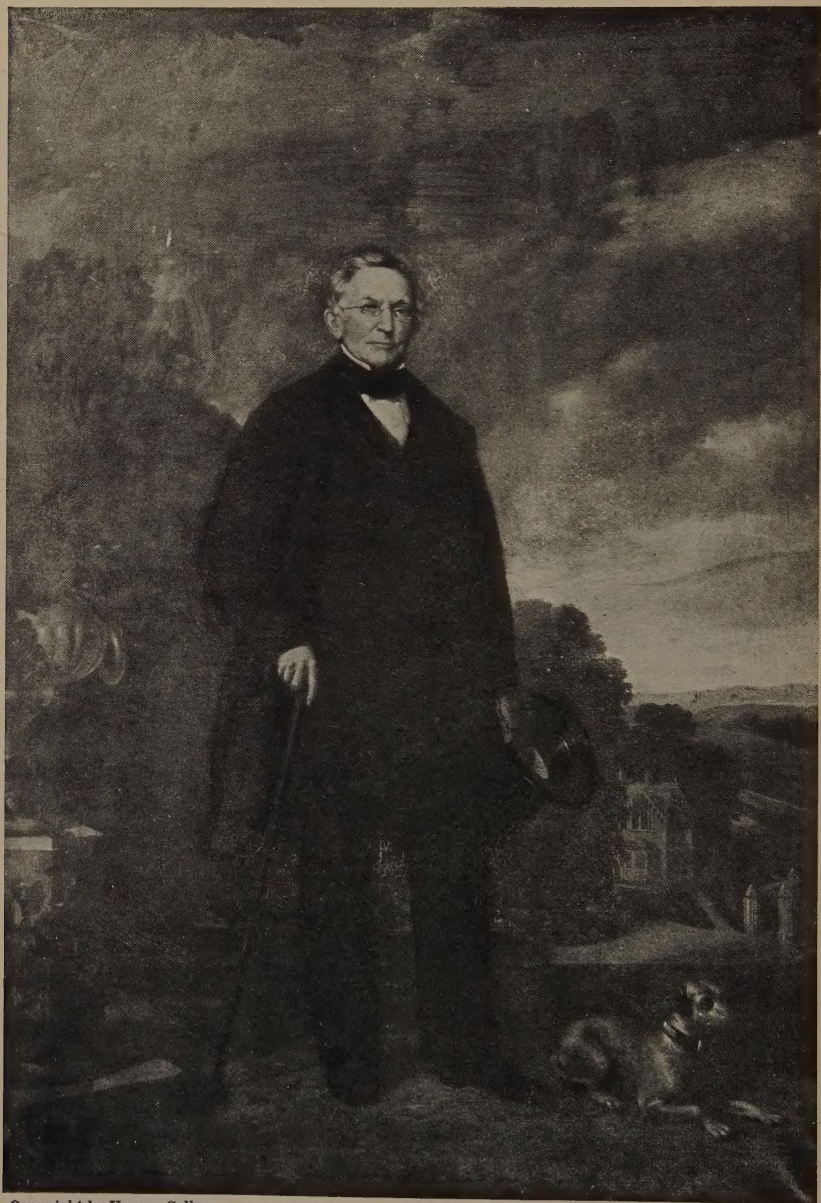


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THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
AND LETTERS
OF
MATTHEW VASSAR



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PORTRAIT OF THE FOUNDER
Painted by J. H. Wright

THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
AND LETTERS
OF
MATTHEW VASSAR

Edited by

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MATTHEW VASSAR

Matthew Vassar, the Founder of Vassar College, was a plain, self-made business man whose life ran along for years in grooves familiar to many American citizens. His story is indeed only a narrative of thrifty money-making in a homely business until, when he had almost reached the scriptural allotment of three score years and ten, the romance of his life appeared in the shape of a great idea and his dreams of fame were shortly realized. The founding of Vassar College was the opportunity, education, and reward of all Matthew Vassar's latent power.

Viewed then, in the light of the significant ending, the whole story of Matthew Vassar's life has interest. Born in England in 1792, Matthew was brought at the age of four to America by his parents, James and Anne Vassar, who were dissenters and wished to escape the taxation involved in the tithes of the church. In 1797, the family purchased a farm on the shores of Wap-penger's Creek, near Poughkeepsie, and here, by raising their own barley and making home-brewed beer, they started in a small way the business in which afterward Matthew made his fortune. In 1801, the Vassar brewery was started in Poughkeepsie and the family moved to town. Matthew got little education here, in fact did not stay with his parents long, as he ran away from home in 1806 to avoid being apprenticed to a tanner, and worked in the country near Newburgh for four years, saving during that time \$150.00,—an in-

dication of the thrift which later was to make his fortune.

In 1810, Matthew returned home to help his father in the brewery, but a year later calamity visited the family, for the brewery was burned, the older son was killed, and the father ruined. Matthew Vassar now had to start again for himself, and he began by brewing ale in a small way and by opening an "oyster saloon" in the basement of the court-house. Business went well enough so that in 1813 he married Catharine Valentine, but the struggle to secure a fortune was long and arduous. Twenty years of industry, however, were rewarded by success. A large, new brewery was built on the river in 1836, and the tide of prosperity kept rising.

His fortune made, Mr. Vassar in 1845 went with his wife and his friend, Cyrus Swan, to Europe. It was during these travels that he was so impressed by the sight of the London Hospital, founded by his relative, Thomas Guy, that he began to dream dreams of seeing himself famous as a benefactor of mankind. After his return, Mr. Vassar enjoyed his wealth in another way, by purchasing a farm of about fifty acres three-quarters of a mile south of Poughkeepsie, and laying it out as a beautiful country estate. "Spring-side," as it was called, became his delight and pride.

But now the great problem of his life became the particular form in which his vision of fame should take shape. Mr. Vassar was wisely determined to be his own executor and to carry out himself whatever plans he should make. Many persons were eager to direct his philanthropic zeal and various schemes, particularly one of a city hospital, were urged. But Mr.

Vassar had early been interested in the education of girls by his niece, Lydia Booth, who had a school in Poughkeepsie; and now the novel idea of a college for young women was implanted in his mind by Milo P. Jewett, an educator, who had taken Miss Booth's school, "College Hill Seminary", after her death. It was under the persistence and persuasiveness of Mr. Jewett that Mr. Vassar was convinced of the dignity and glory of the plan proposed,—“to build and endow a college for young women which shall be to them what Yale and Harvard are to young men.” Mr. Jewett reiterated to him that there was not an *endowed* college for young women in the world although there were “plenty of female colleges so-called” with “no libraries, cabinets, museums, apparatus worth mentioning.” And Mr. Vassar was assured that if he would build such a college, it would be “a monument more lasting than the pyramids.” In 1861 the great step was taken and the charter of Vassar College was secured. On February 26, 1861, the first meeting of the Board of Trustees was held in the Gregory House (now the Morgan House) of Poughkeepsie and here Mr. Vassar at the end of a dignified and remarkable address, presented to the trustees a tin box containing funds for the founding of the college,—more than four hundred thousand dollars of his wealth. The photograph of the Founder in the act of presentation is the picture of the new romance of the brewer's life. For clearly Matthew Vassar's pioneer work for the education of women had become his great romance.

And under it, life was transformed for him for seven years. New interests, new business, new friends, new ideas, and the applause of the world. Like Byron, he

awoke one morning to find that the fame which he coveted was his. And with what pride he refers to the file of letters from distinguished gentlemen educators in this country and abroad that poured in upon him! Soon life-sized portraits of "the Founder of Vassar Female College" must be painted and bronze statue planned and his "likenesses" distributed. And it is all done with such naive surprise over his own new importance that the old man's childlike frankness disarms any criticism of his vanity, even when he jots down in his diary: "The founder of Vassar College and President Lincon—Two Noble Emancipists—one of Woman—The Negro."

The story of the development of his plan and the achievement of his purpose is really told by the diary pages and letters printed in this volume, and hardly an outline is needed here. The first excitement and joy of the enterprise were soon shadowed by differences with Mr. Jewett who had been appointed the first president of the college. He was evidently, for all his ability and power, *persona non grata* to Mr. Vassar's nephew, Matthew, who was closely associated with the Founder in his work, and his influence was gradually undermined by his enemies and finally overthrown by the discovery of a rash letter which he had written in sharp criticism of the Founder. It was a real tragedy for Milo P. Jewett that he had to resign the Presidency before Vassar College, an institution doubtless conceived by his own brain, had ever opened.

The next President, John Howard Raymond, was able to unite all factions and to work happily with Mr. Vassar for the opening and establishing of the college.

With great confidence in his ability, and experience (as President of the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute), Mr. Vassar, as ill health and years weighed upon him, resigned all direct control of college matters and while still living, entered into the reward of his labors,—the spontaneous devotion proffered to him by the early students of the college.

He had never had children. His wife was now dead. It was as fitting as it was dramatic that his life should end at the scene of his great work. On June 23, 1868, he expired at the college while making his address to the trustees. In the last part of the speech, which had not been delivered, he had written words typical of his whole attitude towards the college: "If we only follow on in the old beaten paths we will make no progress. We do no more than others have done before us. We are only copyists and not progressionists. My motto is progress."

The greatest fact in Matthew Vassar's life is the founding of the college that bears his name, but out of that work emerges an intensely interesting personality. The object of publishing Matthew Vassar's own words (in autobiography, diary, and letters) is to make the man himself known, fairly and fully, in the belief that he is well worth knowing.

It was once the fashion not to refer to Mr. Vassar's lack of education, to ignore the stories of his small economies bordering on stinginess, and to forget the ale. Indeed, a popular Vassar song with the refrain:

And so you see, to old V. C.
Our love shall never fail.
Full well we know that all we owe
To Matthew Vassar's ale,

was changed for propriety to

And so you see, to old V. C.
Our love shall never fade.
Full well we know that all we owe
To Matthew Vassar's aid.

A more fair-minded world today is willing to see a great man as he really was, is more inclined to estimate pettinesses in comparison with larger qualities, and to demand even for a hero (or a Founder!) an historical picture. This certainly was Matthew Vassar's own way of telling his story. His autobiography is marked by frankness and simplicity. A pioneer in work for education, he states very openly that he himself got almost no education, "scarcely to read and write". He is equally truthful about his poverty, and his lowly occupations. No false shame stayed his pen.

The material in existence for knowing Mr. Vassar at first hand consists of his "Communications to the Board of Trustees" (already published in pamphlet form), a slight autobiography written in 1866, diaries from 1862-1865 and letters ranging from 1860 to the time of his death. There has been some discussion about the form in which these should be presented to the world, but on the advice of the publishers and a number of scholars it has been decided to print everything with the grammar and spelling of the manuscripts. Matthew Vassar presents the curious paradox of an uneducated business man who is a pioneer in education. His own letters show the keenness of his mind and the originality with which he turned his practical common sense upon educational problems. Irregularities in spelling can hardly belittle his memory.

Paul Leicester Ford in his account of "The True George Washington", states that "through his whole life Washington was a non-conformist as regarded the King's English: struggle as he undoubtedly did, the instinct of correct spelling was absent, and thus every now and then a verbal slip appeared: extravagance, lettely (for lately), glew, riffle (for rifle), latten (for Latin), imagine, winder, rief (for rife), oppertunity, spirma citi, yellow oaker,—such are types of his lapses late in life, while his earlier letters and journals are far more inaccurate". The publishing of the letters of Washington and of facsimiles of them has not injured the fame of the Father of his Country. And the reader who looks at the facsimile of one of Mr. Vassar's letters will get the impression which the mass of letters gives; for the careful vigorous handwriting of the old man and the quaint humor of his expressions make the fact that he writes "asside" and "realy" and "pleasentry" of negligible importance.

Mr. Vassar had the pride and sense of power which naturally belong to the self-made man and these feelings too he frankly expressed. "It has for many years been," he wrote on September 5, 1864, "my last cherished wish and hope to leave a memory behind me that could be an honor to my family name. This last act of mine is the result of Industry, Perserverance and Self-reliance and neither kindred nor friends have reached me an assistant hand. The road I have passed is open for all who will mould their character in honorable pursuits by the same means."

He felt, however, considerable diffidence at first in regard to expressing himself on the new business which was now his life work, educational problems. To Ed-

ward Youmans on March 22, 1861, he spoke his dread of having any of his remarks printed. "I fear it would be looked upon as a sort of burlesque by the literati of our Country, a humble obscure citizen presuming to intrude in the ranks of polite literature". But he adds: "Yet I am so extremely flattered with *that idea* that I consent willingly if *you can derive* profit from its publication".

Again on Oct. 2, '62, he wrote to Charles A. Raymond in regard to the College organization and management "in getting on to this ground I am perfectly aware of my ignorance to lead, and perhaps my folly even to suggest any thing new. . . . yet relying upon a long life observation and experience in the Common business affairs of the world I may have gathered up some knowledge that may have escaped thro' their apparent insignificiency, the minds of the more learned". And later on (Jan. 19, 1864), he humorously declares: "I have been so long surrounded with the brilliancy of professional acumen, that I have almost lost all my common sense."

How Mr. Vassar came to feel that his "common sense" which had made him successful in the business world could contribute something to the educational world is best expressed in his address to the trustees Feb. 23, 1864.

"As I have now withdrawn from every other occupation my activities centre here to such an extent, that scarcely an hour occurs which does not bring with it reflections respecting the best mode of accomplishing this one great object which has become the nearest to my heart. Three years I have devoted to this cause alone—years full of information, discussion, and sug-

gestion, from almost every source and every variety of experience and mind.

It is thus that my own education upon this special subject, in all its phases and relations, developed by such opportunities as offered, by reading and reflection, has given me a better confidence in my own convictions even upon matters not previously familiar to my thoughts."

The letters themselves show the very processes of Mr. Vassar's mind as he gathered in "suggestion from almost every source and every variety of experience." Milo P. Jewett infused him with the idea of founding a college for women. Sarah Jane Hale convinced him that the word "Female" should be removed from the name of the college and supported him in his idea that women should educate women. Edward Youmans, by request, helped him clarify his thoughts on "'The Female' 'her education' her sphere and availability for the greatest usefulness in life, and, the best process to impart it." Charles H. Raymond, a most influential but second-rate adviser appealed to his business thrift with a plan of a sliding scale of salaries for professors, proportioned to their success. And we find Mr. Vassar jotting down in his diary from a book called "Woman's Apology" by Miss Nemo an idea which he often repeated in varying forms: "It is in vain to educate Womans power of thought and then limit the opperation—Education and Liberty walk hand in hand".

But as he investigated, discussed and assimilated the ideas of others, Mr. Vassar began to make certain large ideas his own and to reiterate them as fundamental for woman's education. He was never more

spontaneous than when he talked of his "great object 'physical exercise'" and remarkable for his time was his belief that women should have "daily exposure to the pure air in joyous unrestrained activity". So he chose "the spacious grounds at Mill Cove" for the college, provided a gymnasium and bowling alley, suggested a bathing pool, and favored dancing as "a healthful and graceful exercise".

Again he came to believe that women should be given not only education, but opportunity to use education and therefore in his college professorships must be open to women and perhaps largely filled by them,— "a college for women" is his repeated phrase.

Such a college, too, must be Christian always, but never sectarian, and in regard to nothing else does the Founder express himself more strongly than against having the name of Baptist or the name of any creed stamped upon the college walls. "I hold all Christians alike", he said in a letter. And in his address to the trustees on Feb. 23, 1864, he urged:

"Let our pupils see and know that beyond every difference there is, after all, but one God, one gospel; and that the spires of whatsoever church forever point toward one heaven. And upon this point again, without disparagement to any other religious source, permit me to add that the strongest incentives to goodness, and the most valuable religious tendencies, will be found to flow most of all, like an emanation, from the presence of gifted, cultivated Christian women."

The value of the study of Art was another idea which so possessed Mr. Vassar's mind that by "a new donation of \$20,000" he secured the collection of pictures owned by Doctor E. L. Magoon. "I wish to

make our Art Rooms a decided attraction at once", he wrote June 9, '64, "with the hope of course that it may continue to grow in beauty, value & in educational and refining power."

His standard for the whole equipment and work of the college was the highest, and how his keen business sense supported his ideal is seen in a remarkable letter written near the end of his life (June 10, '68) to President Raymond.

"My maxim or motto is now the same as at the beginning of our enterprise. *Do all things, Intellectuall and Material the best*, and make *your prices* accordingly. . . . The idea that "during the *infancy* of the College to *court* public patronage by catering to *cheap* or *low prices* of instruction is to my mind ridiculous. . . . I go for the *best* means cost what they may & corresponding prices for tuition in return. . . . Suppose we raised the terms (altho' I would not as a whole) only on the *ornamental branches*, do you suppose the College would be *relieved* of *Pupils*. . . . *Nay, not a wit*, I am therefore for giving the Daughters of the public the *very best Means* of Education, and make *them pay for it!*

I will stake my reputation on the result. . . . The *best* article in Market always meets with the most readiest and quickest Sale, and as a general rule pays the largest profit!

I dont believe in erecting a "Monument" to my everlasting Shame by a failure in Judgement in its conductment &."

How deeply Mr. Vassar became interested in the educational problems of the college has been shown by his own words. His oversight of the business side

from the first was detailed and unflagging from the times when he debated whether to delay the completion of the buildings because of the depreciation of securities on account of the war, to the memorandum in his diary on May 27, 1865 of college matters yet to be attended to,—an amazingly long, and varied list. It was not strange that three weeks after this entry the old man of seventy-three made the touching record: "Sick and tired of College business, no one to help me, Except "Scow", Doct. Raymond & Swan. Buckingham does all he can". The next day Mr. Vassar told President Raymond of his resolution to resign from the Chairmanship of the Executive Committee of the College. His unfaltering business sense did not fail him when the time came to relinquish the helm to other hands.

For three years more, Mr. Vassar watched his great work expand. And during this time he realized the reward of all his labors in the honor and affection given him by the students of the college. How interested he was in all their college life, out-doors and in, is seen in his letters to a student who had voiced the devotion of the college in a poem written for the first Founder's Day. These letters are in his happiest mood.

One delight about all the letters of Mr. Vassar is their evidence of the range of persons with whom he was connected in the making of the college: educators like Henry Barnard, Samuel Gregory and Martin B. Anderson; women with a passion for woman's cause like Maria Mitchell and Sarah Jane Hale; two presidents of the college; trustees who numbered in their body historian, inventor, art connoisseur, and clergy-

men; and last the undergraduates. His reactions to all these different kinds of people, his interest in them are vivid.

The phraseology of the letters is another source of pleasure in them and stamps them as Mr. Vassar's own. The question has often been raised as to whether Mr. Vassar actually wrote his addresses to the trustees. A letter to Edward Youmans explicitly asked that gentleman to outline an address for the ceremony of the laying of the corner stone, but when he forwarded a finished speech for that occasion, Mr. Vassar rejected it as "too elaborate" and lacking "pithiness and points for such a ceremony." Mr. Jewett in a manuscript narrative, (written about eighteen years later), claimed that he wrote out in full the address the Founder should make to the trustees at their first meeting, and that Mr. Vassar had "adopted as his own the sentiments which had almost daily been urged upon him for the previous five years." Undoubtedly Milo P. Jewett's ideas were engrafted on Matthew Vassar's mind and went into the making of his early speeches. Then the form of the "Communications to the Board of Trustees" as they were printed in pamphlet shows that spelling at least was corrected and probably grammar and diction polished, for they give virtually no suggestion of having been composed by a man of slight education. But the letters show conclusively that the ideas set forth in the formal addresses were the current thought of Mr. Vassar's mind and the subjects of his most informal communications. Moreover, notes in the diaries of Feb. 12, 1864, June 16, 1864, March 24, 1865, and June 25, 1865, show that Mr. Vassar wrote his own speeches, read them to President

Raymond and Mr. Swan before the meetings of the trustees, and that in one case Doctor Raymond "corrected" his address. This seems rather conclusive evidence that in certain of the speeches at least the bulk of the work is Mr. Vassar's.

The letters are read with the satisfaction of knowing that they are certainly the words of Matthew Vassar himself, and the reader is glad of that, even when newly made words like *rambulating*, *insignificiency*, *beconied*, *conductment*, *briefity* occasionally appear. The phraseology is often made up of popular sayings, proverbs, and comparisons which give a flavor of everyday conversation.

"What is generally taught in schools tends about as much toward discipline, self knowledge, self preservation, or complete living as the fact 'My Neighbors Cat Kittened Yesterday'—a laughable but excellent illustration."

"It is an old proverb that there is no use of crying over 'Spilt Milk' nor can that which is lacking be numbered."

"It is a quaint saying that you cannot loose what you do not posses."

"This nail was a clincher."

"It will be the identical shoal our College bark will strike and if not opening a seam wide enough to sink her, will at least so much impair her seaworthiness as to demand frequent repairs."

"I do not expect to make *Wistliz* out of pigs tails or to give new *constitutions* to organic invalids."

"A *Knowledge* of a *disease* is said to be *half its Cure*".

"There must not be, and there will not be with my

consent a nursery opened in V. F. C. for mere *sinecures*. . . . Nothing is so destructive to my Bee-Apirary at Springside as the confounded old Drone bees, they neither gather honey themselves, nor let those that would be *busy, work*."

"My maxim in all human policys is viz: whatever you do, do well—if it is to cut off a limb, do it quickly and thoroughly taking no more time and no less of it than is necessary for the health and good of the patient."

"It is just as important that we have our Scholars under our own control as the Colonel of a Brigade when going into battle. . . . there furloughs & passes are never granted without *absolut necessity*."

Interspersed amidst such colloquial chatting are a few letters of a more pompous sort in which the simplicity and humor of the man are lost in the importance of the Founder. To Samuel F. B. Morse, one of the charter trustees, Mr. Vassar writes a request for a portrait of himself, and after telling Mr. Morse that a portrait of Edward Everett has been given and hung on one side of the picture of the Founder, he adds:

"And if I now could be so happy to prevail on you to donate to the College a Oil painting of yourself to be placed on the other Side of my picture, you would not only confer a personal favor on me, that I shall highly appreciate, but in time to come it would illustrate the american representatives of Science and Art that gave birth to my own inspirations of donating the whole results of my long lifes perseverance to the cultivation of Art and Science for Woman as well as for man".

This is the tone of the Founder, and the pompous

style and the homely are interlaced in the correspondence. Together they give a composite picture of Matthew Vassar.

For through autobiography, diaries and letters the picture of Matthew Vassar is painted as clearly as in Elliott's or Wright's life-sized portrait. A man who had been forced by poverty to count the pennies until petty economy was his habit, through his own thrift and keenness makes a large fortune. Without education, he sets out in old age on the adventure of giving education to others, and agog for fame, takes the chivalrous road of pioneer work for a woman's college. To that novel scheme, he gives all his interest, his time and his fortune until he himself is educated unaware, and his thought extended beyond the limiting walls of the brewery to the unbounded kingdom of the mind. Simplicity itself in voicing his wish for fame, he marvels at the attainment of his desire. Directly as he expressed his pride in his work, Vassar Female College, he never seems to have realized that he himself was as unique an appearance in the field of education. Business ability and common sense were the qualities he saw in himself. His letters show him as a larger person,—of quaint humor, vigorous expression, sound judgment and high standard for work of any sort, a man who made ale and college alike the best in the market. Few men at the end of a long exacting business life have the vigor and interest to grasp an absorbing new idea. Matthew Vassar at seventy espoused the cause of woman, and in championing her education made himself more than famous.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND THE DIARIES

The autobiography of Matthew Vassar is a brief story recorded in the Founder's own stiff handwriting, and covering a few pages in a cheap note-book of ruled paper.¹ It is in the nature of a reminiscence written in 1866, so that the events of his life are reviewed by a man who is still ingenuously surprised at his new importance as a great benefactor in the educational world. From this viewpoint, the old man is inclined to dwell on the marvellous preservation of his life at various times, as if feeling that he was saved for the final great purpose. And this wonder about his work may be back of his simple statement of his utter lack of education. The interest in the story of Matthew Vassar lies precisely in this contrast between his lack of formal school training, and his adoption and origination of great educational ideas. To emphasize the marvel of this contrast, the autobiography and the extracts from the diary are printed with the original spelling of the Founder. The collection of letters is made up partly from originals where the spelling is Mr. Vassar's own and partly from the copy-book kept by his clerk in which the spelling is much better. It has seemed wise not to attempt to change these idiosyncrasies of orthography, but the letters copied by the clerk are starred.

¹There exist two fragmentary attempts, made by Mr. Vassar to rewrite this autobiography, and a manuscript in another hand in which the whole is recast in a pompous strain with many moral reflections. It has seemed best to print Mr. Vassar's original sketch.

A few letters dealing merely with business routine have been omitted.

The diaries owned by the college are four small leather volumes for the years 1862, 1863, 1864 and 1865, in which Mr. Vassar jotted down in pencil memoranda of events day by day. There is a medley of remarks on the weather, petty accounts, expenditures for charity (underscored twice in the margin!), records of daily trips out to college and of his companions, details of the building of the college and the planning of the grounds, statements of accidents to workmen and of various discouragements. Along with these are more personal notes of real feeling,—over the loss of his dog Tip; on his waking at midnight on his birthday; on the first anniversary of his wife's death,—and intermingled with all these jottings are sudden startled comments on national events,—the surrender of Lee's army; the assassination of Lincoln.

Nothing brings the Founder nearer to us than these penciled notes. A selection has been made of typical pages and of the most interesting records. At the back of the volumes aphorisms, remedies and anecdotes are introduced. Some of these too are copied.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

PREFACE TO THE FOREGOING REMARKS

The birthday, or day of one's birth has always for time immemorable been regarded as an epoch peculiar among civilised nations, and is at this day observed among many families, but that of the married relations still more so as to induce its observance to be celebrated with much feasting glee &c at every return of a quarterly century call^d a Silver Wedding & half century a Golden Wedding, but with our family^s neither of these old custom^s has ever been observed especially with me as it has always been a mooted question on what day *I was born*, the family record reporting it at *mid-night*, Father insisting it was before 12 O'ck at night, and Mother after 12 O'ck on the 28th April 1792. This being settled, I commence my worldly career briefly as follows— M. Vassar married on the 7th March 1813 to Catherine Valentine by Rev^d Lewis Leonard.

Monday 4th December, 1866.

A few reminiscences of my Life, many of which being only connected with my *buisness* relations I have omitted, and much besides of no interest to the public, and would not have written *these*, but at the request of several friends with reference to the Institution of which I am the Founder.

1792

Born according to the Old Records in the Family Bible April 29th 1792 at Scarning East-Tuddingham, County of Norfolk, Duffee-Green, England.

The earliest recollection I have of myself would not date back as far as the *memory* of my worthy friends, Ephram Chandler Holbrook, or Henry Conklin, the former remembering when he was *weaned* the latter hearing the trinketts or keys rattle in his mother^s POCKETT before he was born, but I DO remember from the age of 3 to 4 years old of being placed by my Elder Brother upon the back of one of my Fathers farm horses, (John Guy Vassar) he riding one & seating me on the other to go with them to water to a pond near the family Farm house, which pond may be seen in the rear of the brick homestead with tile roof in an oil-painting in my possession,—I say on decending the bank (to the water) being steep, the horse when in a little ways, curved his head to drink, when I tottled over his neck into the pond making an awfull plash & frighting both horses starting them in a run, the other horse throwing off my Brother. Here in under the water I lay completely submerged & almost Lifeless before rescued by some one of the family, I do not distinctly remember who.

Another adventure with a narrow escape of my Life was being chased by a furious English Bull in crossing a large common on the Estate of the Lord of the Manor the Duke of Norfolk, on this wise, my elder Sister Sophia 10 years my senior in company, to shorten the distance of our walk to a Neighbours (a Mr. Bond), passed over a "Style" of a "Hawthorne hedge", and when about midway of the field saw a herd of Cattle feeding, a scarlet shawl on my sister attracted the animals attention, when a Bull furiously made to-wards us bellowing & throwing up

the Earth with his hoofs, hurring my Sister & dragging me along and just reaching the outer bounds of the field enclosure on the opposite Side as the enraged Animal at the moment came up.

1795

This year or the year following I do not remember distinctly which, my Sister Maria (Maria Booth) took me to another Neighbours house and who had a Boy about my age or a few years elder, who as soon as he saw me to show his love and friendship began to grasp the hair of my head, pulling it out by inches, not a little to my senseabillity & disquietatude, and add to which, he began pelting me over my face & eyes in such a voilent manner that I bellowed aloud—I may as well say, that the Boy was an Idiot—deaf and dumb.

A Blank in my recollections here follows,—I have no distinct remembrance of any special interviening occurances between this time and the family confusion in packing up to go to America.

Recollect something about packing up, arrived in the City of London, the being carried up by my Father to the top of a long flight of winding Stairs in St Paul Church to the *Wispering Gallery in the Dome* of the Tower, the looking out of the Grated Windows 500^{ft} hight the smallness of objects in the Streets & River below,—Thames filled with shipping, Bee-hive Sciene, the embarkation for America on Board Ship Criterion, Captⁿ Evary,—a week after encountering a terrible Storm,—Sea sickness, the waves breaking over the vessel, sweeping me from the companion-way to the Lard-board side of the Ship, loosing my new London bought Hat, and just escaping a watery grave. Arriving at

the Banks of N. Foundland, sailors catching codfish, porpuses playing round the Ship, Sea Fowls, Arival after 70 days passage—how things looked on our approaching Land, our being met and greeted by the English Residents in the City of New York being fruit season, how abundantly we were supplied by them—how readily they provided us with Rooms especially with an English family by the name of “Withington” a large Brewer in the upper part of the eastern bounds of the City. Remaining in N’York through the winter moving up to Po’keepsie in the Spring of

1796

Into a Brick house now in ruins (of which I have an Oil-painting view off) opposite the late William Worrel^s residence on the Dutchess C^o Turnpike.

How during the past winter while the family remained in the City N Y, Father and Uncle Thomas, the latter a Batchellor coming with us from England took up a line of march for the then called *West*, and after several days travel zig-zagging right and left through the Valley of the Hudson and Mohawk Country, up as far as Utica, but seeing nothing to fill their idea^s of farmland or culture returned to the City dissatisfy^d with the Country and was about to re-embark to their native homes, but meeting with some English family going up the River to Po’keepsie by the name of “Young” and New House” they were persuaded to wait, and finaly came with them, and ultimately purchased a farm lying on “Wappingers Creek” now Manchester—particular following see a paper on file “Vassar^s Family Record” which embraces many

sketches of the Family, and self. Some relic^s of Indian life could be still seen on or about Po-keep-sing—Indian relics dug up on Main & Vassar Streets.

1798

The fall of this year attacked with Typhus fever and narrowly escaped death. The same Fall Uncle Thomas returned to England to purchase cerels & some small stock for the farm. Remmember tending the Cows with Sister Maria on the Wappingers Creek, being no fences to prevent them crossing over to our Neighbours—how we amused ourselves, Cutting Wil-lows, making whistles of the rind & fishing with pin-hooks in the limped flowing stream—how we waided need deep on its sloping banks how a huge water-snake chased us,—how in fishing we caught *not* a tartar but an immense snapping Turtle, how we cut off his head to get the hook out of his mouth, throwing the body into the Stream, and ten days after saw the creature crawling about *headless* at the bottom of the cristal waters.

How I was again taken sick with another attack of typhus fever, and after 7 days given up as hopeless, when old Doct Deleverge attended me & soon thereafter rallied and walking out with rude made crutches to a Hickory Tree near the house to gather nutts, under which was strewed black broken & crooked limbs, & one appearing to my dim vision more smooth & tapering I reached to pick it up,—when, lo, on touching it flew from me,—It was a montrous Black—Snake—Unlike the Brazen Serpent—It frightened, but did not heal, I lingered many days—

Following this incident, I remember ascending the summit of a Hill lying west of the Homestead with my Sister Jemmima & child—like climbing up on the top of a tree to look at the Po', Church Steeples (The intervening space lies the now College grounds, this plot of flat level land was well known as the Dutchess County Club Horse-Race-Course, associated by a Charter with the Long Island Club Horse Race Society for the Promotion of the Breed of Horses. I remember attending one of these former races with a Gentleman acquaintance by the name of "Brush" who came with his Lady to my house, but as the amusement bro^t together many Gamblers and Black-Legs it was not regarded verry Respectible, so I hired a close Carrage and went out with them to avoid being seen by as few as possible.)

Resuming my story from other last page looking at Po'keepsie Steeples I was going with Mother to Town on a pleasant Saturday with waggon & horses to Market Butter, Eggs, and a Barrel of home-brew^d Beer, when all of a sudden by the carelessness of the Driver was upset landing Mother and waggon contents in the ditch, no bones being Broken, gathered up the fragments adjusted Matters and pushed on to Po'—made our quarters at a family of "Bosworth^s" English Bakers who furnished us with the first White Wheat Bread I ever ate in America—How I spread on the butter and covered it swimmingly with Goose Gravy drippings and how Father cuffed my ears for my extravagance.—How the family removed to Po', occupying the so call^d "Duffee-House" corner of Washington and Lafayette St., now occupied by Hiram

Haight. In the Fall of this year mov^d in what was call^d the "Ellison House" now and old delapidated Building standing in the Rear of "Gage's Markett"

The following Summer (1801) our family moved into the New Brewery, apartments having been finished off for Dwelling-house during the erection of my present Residence. It was during our living in part of the Brewery I came near loosing my life by the fumes of charcoal thro' the careless of a Man, who roommate with me who came home late at Night & Building & fire on the hearth with Charcoal

Being insensible did not rise for Breakfast & when call^d made no answer alarm being given to the family I was soon relieved being taken into fresh air—but this was attended by spasms & Vomiting—The Man, my room Mate was Rob^t Ray whom a few Months after Broke his Neck by falling from the Hay loft, being early in the Evening & not coming to Supper my Mother sent me to the Barn for him I call^d again & again but he made no answer, when on entering the Barn found him lying on the Barn floor with his face upward & with the light of the Moon shining upon his face peceived it bloody I touch^d him & found him cold and dead.

It was during this period of my boyhood I had many wandering thoughts—Had a fancy for Shows, comical exhibitions, fitted up in the Garret of the house a rude Theatre, had quite a Corps Children actors. This fancy took my mind by seeing a performance in the Villge

I was also found of painting, bo^t me a small Box of water Colours painted rude Christmas pieces filled

them with up with Doggery Rhimes and went in the Country to sell them, Remember selling one to old Richard Davis Lower Landing who gave me a Crown Spanish Piece for it.

1804

I think it was this year I was attack^d with another Sickness of Typhus Fever lasting 8 days, on the night of the 9th it Broke, uncountious however for several days remember my feelings at that moment, I had been dreaming of lying at a Copious Spring of Water, were many a time I had slacked my thirst while gathering huckle-berries & gunning in the deep ravine as you ascend the public Road from old Pells Landing & while I say this in my dream was slaking my burning thirst I awoke & try to rise but my watchers Harry Cook & Russell, came to my bed-side, and ask^d me what I wanted, I reply^d to get up—(but could not stir) and go home &c.

Recollect going to Night School after my recovery to old Gabriel Ellison, had a fracas with him, because he struck me over the head with a round heavy Ruler, flooring me, how I got up and and sent an Ink Stand at his Yellow Breeches, besmeering his White Cotton Stockings to a pepper and Salt colour.—Left School under L. B. Van Kleeks Great Coat when School was dismissed at Noon. Quite a Rumpus was made by this event, complaints preferred to the family, how Father insisted my returning to School, how Mother interceeded for me and finally sent me to John Harbottle^s Night School in Union St. To sum it all up between my own temper, and Fathers severity & indifference to

giving me an Education I got none—Scarcely to read & write.

1806, 7, 8

In the Spring I think of one of these years I do not distinctly recollect which I left home to seek my Fortune but not wither, I had just heard from Mother, that Father was about Apprenticing me to the trade of a Tanner & Courier John Garry Corner Washington & Main St. on the Morning the articles were to signed, I told mother I would never be bound to such a trade, it was disgusting to me & would run away from home to avoid the contracts—I did so, and Started privately on my Journey and on Monday May 8th set off to seek my fortune with 6/ in my pockett, two corse East India Muslin Shirts, a pair of woollen Socks, Scow Skin Shoes, all tied up in a Cotton Bandana Handkerchief. This exit I say was unknown to Father, but my Mother being privy to it & seeing my determination fur^d and rather aided the plan, and on the Morning above stated accompanied me on foot 9 Miles on my Journey to Hamburgh Ferry—here we parted and never shall I forget that Memmoral day, both wept^d tears abundantly after crossing the River I wandered southardly, and overtaken an Aged Man with one horse waggon, asked him for a ride, he look^d cross and surley me at first and ask^d me where I was going, my answer was like poor Paddie's asking the like fav^r from a Country Man—who enquired of Pat were he was going reply Oh Sir, IT ITS QUITE IMMETERIAL. Suffice to say he told me jump in his waggon, when a dialouge set in, old Man at first insinuated that I was a run-away-

Apprence this stuck close to the rib. I tho^t he had heard of my Conduct, I began to feel and look guilty, just at this time the Old Gentleman (for I must now call him so) turned the head of his Nag to the left hand directly & close by to a Large I may say immense Tree, Commonly know as the Balm of Gilliard Tree from whence the name of the Small Village, *Balm-town*.

Soon however turning from the Main Road to the left we arrived at a plain Country house, halting at the door, out came an Elderly Woman greeting his return in Safety (for it seems he had been absent some days) which afterwards proved to be his Wife.—Dis-mounting and putting our Nag in the Stable and coming back to the house found supper ready in waiting, but thier was no lost time in consuming my part of it, as I was verry hungry & tired—this service over the Old Gentleman revealed to me his name, business &c—He was an Englishman by the name of “Butterworth” had a Son a Merchant in Balm-town wholesale & retail, In the following Morning took me to see his son at his Store only a few Roods from the House

How they went to the farther end of the Store & talk^d to-gether, and after some half hour call^d me to them, and ask^d me wether I would like to live with them (by the by they both New my Father) and by this time both of them knew that I had left home unbeknown to him.

How they pointed out my work if I did Stay, viz, to Measure Wood Weight Iron, measure Salt, &c in fact do all kinds of drudging even to taking care of the Old Gentleman^s horse. All of which I consented and found a home for 3 Years, Begining with Labour for a living and ending on a Sallary of \$300 pr annum.

But having been offered better Pay by a M^r Smith in the Neighbourhood I left them and in the interval made my first visit home in Company with a friend named "Williams".—We left "Balmtown" on a Saturday Evening about sunset a bright Moonlight night for Po'keepsie & after walking some 14 Miles found ourselves opposite Lewisburgh, but feeling exceedingly tired & sleepy fell down on the road it was not then day Light, but could walk no further the Roads being awfully Bad, so we ask^d for Lodgings at a Country Tavern, but being nearly Mr^s the Old Land Lord took us to be Thieves or house-Breakers. It was during my Stay with "Smith & Son" (for went there on my return from Po visit) that the Great "Eclipse" of the Sun occured I think in the Year 1806, in June of this year, being on a Grand Military Parade occasion while Gen^l Morgan Lewis was Governor—I remember that a vast number of people men & women where in the Store trading on that day & but few knew any thing about the "Eclipse" consequently were terribly frightened, being mostly off the Methodist persuasion and knowing nothing of the cause they began to pray, thinking the world was coming to an end, especialy at the height of the Eclipse when almost total darkness & the fowls going to Roost, the Sight & its reflections were bewildering to them but when it was past & over, they began to thank God, and Sing phalams.--

* * * * *

1808

My return to Po'keepsie after an absence of 5 to 6 years by the request of my Father who wanted me to

take charge of his Books & attend to Collections of Ale^s and Beer^s Moneys which at that time was quite considerable having all or most part of the River-towns-trade, from NewBurgh to Hudson,—How we Sold Chancellor Livingston Red Hook Fall & Spring large Quantity of Ale & deliv^d it by Sloops, my entertainment at “Livingston” by his English Steward, his kindness &c—My going to NewBurgh to collect Ale Moneys—Hayman^s Hotel, a Southern wealthy Planter as a guest of the house, Married to a Young Miss of some 15 years, a Matrimonial affair got up by her Mother, a Widdow, and her only Child, how the girl fooled the old Man, would get him early to Bed in order to have a good time (as she said) with the Young Border, quite a flirt.—How I used to go to NYork in Packet Sloops, The Young Folks planning together in Winter to join each other in their Spring visit voyages, What sports we had in rambling over the Shores when becalmed, going ashore at Van-Plank-Point getting Peaches in the Fall, being as plenty as apples & nothing to pay—Piggs where then the best Customers.—

How I dreamed of seeing a Ghostly Apparition—In this wise, I dreamt that a party of young folks were gayley enjoying by Feasting &c &c at my house on an Evening or rather my Fathers House where I now live, and in the height of our Sports a *rapt* was at the parlour door, opening from the Hall, when I called out in custom “Walk In”. The door opened slowly when an object appeared in the costume of a decrepid old beggar-woman walking with a crutch, head & faced covered in part with a long Black vail.—All was silence I rose and approached towards her “and said to

her what do you want old Woman"—She points out her long and attenuated arm, and with sarcastic look, and extended & quivering forefinger say^s it is *you that I want*". I made a motion to take her by the arm to show her the outer-door, when she suddenly disappeared in vapour leaving a death Skeliton behind—I then awoke, not a little frightened by my courious Dream,—This is however but a faint discription—It followed me many Years. I must leave the Morale of it—It had its point.

I remember on a dismall dark Night of being in company with several of my playmates in the old Brewery Malt Kiln room warming ourselves by the Kiln Fires and the elder Boys telling frightfull Ghosts-Storeys, when some Boy said that nothing ever frightened him, a Bet was made that none of the Company dare go the then just opened Grave Yard by cutting & opening "Vassar" S^t and get a relic from the crumbling graves exposed, Brother "Guy" took the *Bet* and off he went, Bringing back a *Schull* with partly covered *hair*.

The Storey of a headless man—Runs in this wise, On a public General Fall Muster day held on the old Commons known as the "French" Property, now Academy &c Streets, I tarried late, nevertheless had to get a family Cow from the Lot now occupy^d by "Mr. Haggerty" Flourist.—The adjoining land around was a sort of Swamp & underbrush—A path leads through from this cleard pasture lot to Washington S^t—a deep Ravine laid on the South Side of the path, the side & bottom of the Ravine was a wilderness of Bryers, Elder Bushes, infested with Snakes toads & other vermin and on the opposite side near

Washington Street was an old delapidated Tan-Yard Currying Shop &c.—Returning with my Cow to Pasture after being Milk^d and passing the latter, the full Moon just rising, the light shone on an object in the Curring-Yard resimbling an object like a Man with his head cutt off and Blood trinkling down over his Shoulders. The Cow saw the object first and suddenly Boulted down the embankment on the left into the slimy & entangling ravine, when I looked to the right and saw the above object—Hair Standing on end at the Sudden fright I stood aghast, but after a Moment pause made rapidly down the path way to the Cleared pasture field leaving my Cow to get out of the Mire as well as she could.—Not daring to return to the house (now the old back Building rear “Sage” Markett) I creped the back way fritened almost out of my wits, fainting telling my Storey to my Elder Brother Guy & Sisters—the former went into the Street, and mustering a Number of Boys acquainting them of what I had seen, we all arm^d ourselves with weapons Clubs &c and marched down to the Ghostly Spot, and going faintly & fearfully up to it to attack it found it a huge Ox-hide hung on a post with horns on and the inside outwards.—This accorded with the common report, that some years previous, a Man throat was cut in this Shop.—

In the Spring of this year returned home from 5 years absence at Newburgh, employ^d myself principally about my Fathers buisness—keeping his accounts making his collections &c &c.—The Spring following while my Father was absent in New York May 10th 1811 his Brewery took fire & burt down and having no Insurance thereon this Calamity ruined him, besides

which the loss was attended by the death of my Brother the Elder John Guy Vassar, Father of my Nephew Jⁿ. G. Vassar the great Travellor now in Europe, whom the day after the fire lost his life by descending into a vat charged with *Carbonic Acid Gass*. In the following summer 1812 began the world,—*that is the buisness world for myself by getting married* and begining house-keeping, Renting part of a tenement at \$40 p^r year, and was severely rebuked by my Father for my *extravagance*—\$25 p^r year was as much as he tho^t I ought pay—but I will not pursue my narative down any further, as most part of my life from this time till some 18 years ago was filled up with the ordinary buisness relations with its varous phases, *ups* and *downs*. It was not until about 1845 I visited Europe & while in London visited the famous “Guy” Hospital, the founder of which a family relative “John Guy” a Nephew to John Guy Vassar had the honor of being named after.—Seeing this Institution first suggested the idea of devoting a portion of my Estate to some Charitable purpose, and about this period took quite an interest in a Niece of mine Lydia Booth who was then engaged in a small way in the tuition of Children resulting in after years in the opening of a female Seminary in Po’keepsie, being the first of kind excepting one other M^{rs} Conger in the Village. The force of circumstances brought me occasionally in buisness entercourse with my Niece, which will account for the early direction of my mind for the enlarged Education of Women and the subsequent drift of enquiries in my conversation & correspondence with gentlemen Educators in this Country and a few in Europe, which by reference to letters on file will more fully appear. Hav-

ing a few years previous taken a deep interest in the secular or temporal affairs of the Baptist Church as one of the B^d Trustees & being an early advocate of erecting a new house of Worship I took an active part in raising by subscription the necessary funds procuring Architecural plans &c, but the enterprise resulted in entailment of a debt (against the Society) by which I afterwards cancelled of some \$25000 to \$30,000 and subsequently gave to the Society by legal conveyance of the whole property by Deed of the same, since follow^d from that date to the present time with a donation of 3 to \$400 p Year.—



THE VASSAR BREWERY

PAGES FROM THE DIARIES

Tuesday February 25, 1862

Meeting Trustees of
V. Female College at

Gregory House

After Meeting the Members came to my home and examined *Elliotts* Picture I then made them a present each of John G. Vassar 20 Years around the World.—
See List on file in Letters

Paid Express Charges on 30 Vassar Travels around the World \$.75

Monday March 24, 1862.

Meeting of the Ex. Committee this morning J. Renwick Jr Present

Debates on Roofing College this Season

“ “ Building Office in Main Street

“ “ Renwick “to make” Plan do

In Session 4 hours, much talk

Prof^r Mann Associate Ed^r. of Com. Advertiser N York called and took Notes from my Biography and Prof^r H. Barnard is to publish a short synopsis about College, and my history etc.

River opened to-day

Wednesday March 26, 1862

Likenesses

Gave Miss Storud. Miss Sarah Varick each one Likeness—

Thursday April 3^d 1862

Mess^r Prof Jewett & Brackett left for N. Y. to sail on Saturday for Europe p^r Steamer Edinburgh accompanied them to RR Depot and took leave of them—

W^m. Smith called at my office this Morning—I once lived with his Father Daniel Smith at Balm Town some 50 Years ago—It is now about 40 years since we last saw each other.

Called to see Sister Maria this morning.

Monday April 14 1862

Ex. Committee met today. Renwick was up with drafts of *Lettering* for Tablets—went out to Grounds with Harloe—Amanda Mess^r Jewett Rev^d Ch. Raymond and Miss Jewett Rode out College Grounds and Springside with my Carriage this morning.

Wrote Prof Jewett and Brackett p^r *Mail* this afternoon.

Tuesday May 6, 1862

Charity Gave Wm. H. Vanderpool

1 Overcoat almost new—\$10.00

1 Woolen Vest 1 p^r. Pants casimere
almost new—\$7.00

Friday June 13, 1862

Renwick up to-day. Rode to Ground^s went on top 3 Teir Beams with him Dubois Harloe—&c &c

New Potatoes and Chery Pies
from Springside—Cucumbers 3d Time this Season—

Maria Booth called at House this morning. first time in 12 mos.

Wednesday July 3, 1862

Rode to College with Wife and Miss Mattstur this Morning.

Saturday August 2^d 1862

M^{rs} Morgan (Late Valentine) call^d this afternoon to see Catherine. Miss Matthews was washing her, and asked her to wait 10 or 20 Minutes, she said she could not as her husband was waiting at the Door in his Carrage, asked to call again but could not was going home on Monday—had a child in waggon with them, M^{rs} M. look ill-natured and would not wait for Catherine to be dressed—.

Grant her husband.

Saturday August 23, 1862

Sad Accident at College this A M. 2 Men fell with scaffold one Killed the other sadly injured—

Gave Harloe \$5. to aid in expenses of Funeral this P. M.—\$5.00

A Solemn Procession

Samuel McCollery—Killed

John Porter fataly injured—Cottery was from Staten Island single Young Man—

JOTTINGS AT THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME OF THE DIARY.

May the Evenings diversion bear the Mornings reflection.

May Poverty always be a days March behind us.

In ascending the Hill of Prosperity may we never meet a *friend*

Sore Throat Fine salt, drop on the swollen parts—
cures instantly

Depthera—Gurgle warm water & salt will cure
after a few trials.

We must be like *Zaccheus* if we would see Christ we
must *climb up* If we would follow him, we must come
down.

If you wanted to be *suted* go to a Taylor. If you
want to be non-suted go to a Lawyer.

Tuesday Oct 13, 1863

Wrote E. E. Hunley this A. M. Rode to College
with D^r. Babcock had much talk about his future em-
ployment did not complain or talk hard about *Jewett*
but was quite anxious to have some place in College—
and tho^t he could find a travelling Agency of some
other sort, and as a cover for a college Profesship.
“Vir” To solicit donation for Scholarship^s Endow-
ments, and collect many very valuable books as gifts
from his numerous friends and acquaintances—In this
occupation he would begin his labours next Spring—
All this however would be done in a way without ap-
pearing as the employ^d or paid Agent of the College.
All of which I told him I would reflect upon and Re-
port. &c

Call^d on Sister Maria this P. M. Matthew, hired
carriage and took out to College Margaret Hewitt,
Mrs. Chancy Price and Mrs. Holden—

Carolyn Harbottle and 2 Ladies call^d this P M to
see Portraits &c. M^{iss} Nemo call^d and I bot her Book
—“Womans Appology”

Paid—	\$1.00
Charity	\$1.00

Tuesday November 3^d, 1863

Election this day—Voted Republican tickitt

Saturday Nov 7, 1863

Rode to College with Jewett Amanda & Prof. Wood from Brooklyn, a man of great experience in Botany and suggested some excellent ideas about the grounds to be appriated for a Botanical Garden East of College and across in part of the Ravine and Creek.

Saturday Nov. 21 1863

Very Rainy Day

My New Garments came back from Taylors this P M. Coat Pants & Vest.

Lossing call^d today had long talk &c.

Tuesday Nov 23^d. 1863

A very heavy Stormy-day—

A meeting or Celebration of Eastman Schollars 800 was to come off today but the rain prevented

Large Gathering at Pine Hall to Night and refreshments given to Eastman pupils & public

Tip taken quick sick last night with Applexy wrote his Euolgy, expecting he will die before morning.

Amanda ¹ gone to the Hall to hear lecturer of Bungy N Y in behalf of Eastman College

Eastman College 800 serenaded my house to Night.

Monday. Nov^r Nov 30, 1863

Gave poor Dog Tip a dose of Morphine shall Know the results in Morning &c

¹ Amanda Jermond, Mr. Vassar's house-keeper.

Tuesday Dec^r. 1, 1863

Poor Dog. Tip Died this morning He was drowned in the Brewery Cistern of the old Malt house and Buried by Joseph Jarocks asside of Dog—Don in his Master garden I could not see the sight and therefore went with Edward Vassar & Mr. Hunter to clean up Plots of Baptist Burial Grounds. Called on "Swan" this P. M. and gave him Obituary of Dog. Tip to have publish^d—Fanny was in the office I walk^d home with her.

Tuesday Dec. 15, 1863

Doct. Babcock call^d at my office this P. M. when he again opened the subject of "Appointments" in the College and observ^d that he had been considering over the matter of the Lybrairian" and Gen^l Agent for the collection & buying of Books and he tho^t he could fill that plan to *sattisfaction* and would accept the appointment as Lybrian for *one half* the sallaries we paid our Professors—To all of which *being a new* Suggestion I said I would reflect upon and when the proper time came would given him an answer. He remarked that he tho^t probably the First B Church would give him a call to the Pastorship.

Saturday January 30, 1864

My dear Wife Catharine Died this day one year ago at 1/4 of 10 O. K. P. M.

Friday Feb. 12, 1864.

Finished writing My Address to Trustees for the Meeting on the 23^d inst—this morning.

Thursday March 3, 1864

Benson J. Lossing call^d this morning opened my heart to him on all my trouble with "Jewett". Read his Letters to me, mine to him, also mine to Doct. Hague Boston, and Jewett^s Letter found on Swan^s Desk, which see on file—made him my *Confidential friend*.

He Lossing promised it should remain *Sacred*.

Thursday March 17, 1864

Prof Jewett call^d this morning and deliv^d me a letter explaining and appologising for his course of conduct—which see on file

Privately in my office.

Monday April 4, 1864

Settled all Traveling Expenses with "Swan" in Jewett^s matter by Ex Com. this day say about \$130 and charg^d to College.

Tuesday April 19, 1864

"Swan" returned from N. Y. this 8 o'ck P. M Stopped at moment to tell me that "Sheldon" told him & also "Bishop" that "Jewett" had tendered his *Resignation*

Friday April 29, 1864.

My Birth-Day

Meeting of the College Board of Trustees this morning on the Subject of Jewett^s Resignation &c &c &c

Trustees Rode out to College afterward, see minutes.

Wednesday May 4, 1864

Whent to N. York this morning with Buckingham and Matthew on College Buisness to see Doc^t Raymond on accepting and terms of *Presentdency* to the College.

Saturday May 7, 1864

Rode to College with Prof^r Raymond Matthew, Swan and Buckingham—all except Swan dined with us Buckingham, Swan, Raymond took Tea the latter left for N Y at 7 P M.

Miss Nemo Remarks

“ It is in vain to Educate Womans power of thought and then limit the operation ”—Education and Liberty walk hand in hand ”

JOTTINGS AT END OF VOLUME.

Luke 13, & 28

Try to enter in at the strait gate &c

The founder of Vassar College and President Lincoln—Two Noble Emancipists—one of Woman—the Negro—

If any louds too deep we have a *Schow* here to lighten you.

A noted miser having relented so much as to give a *Beggar* 6 *pence* suddenly died. soon after, the attendant physician gave it as his opinion it was from the *enlargemnt* of the *heart*.

Woman: To her virtue we give love,
To her Beauty our admiration
To her *hoops* the sidewalk.

Friday June 3^d June 1864

Rode to College with "Magoon" Swan & Matthew & Babcock on Matters of Library Room & Art Gallery—Promised to give Magoon \$20,000 for all his complete collection of Art he is first to send me "Catalogue" of them if approved I am to pay him \$10,000 cash and \$10,000 yearly payments of \$1000 to suit my convenience with Interest after the said Collection is deliv^d & put up under Magoon superintendnc. This is the Gallery of V. F. C. only cost of putting up to be at my Expense—Magoon takes the responsibility of safe delivery to the College.—Swan Dined with us.

Thursday June 16th 1864

Rec^d a Letter from Rev^d. J. H. Raymond accepting the Presidency of the V. F. College on terms of \$2000 till the College is in operation then to be \$4000 pr. Annum &c &c Swan and me read over my forth coming address today & he took dinner and Tea with us.

Thursday June 30th 1864

Ex. Board met this morning to take some action on "Harloe" failure & abandonment of the College *Contract*—The excitement of discussion completely overcame endurance & came home prostrated & went to Bed.

Wednesday Aug. 10, 1864

We had 21 persons call at Springside today—Miss Hicks Miss Vincents—&c

Wm. Fay, Mary Wells &c &c others.

Wednesday Sept 7, 1864.

Rode to College with Matthew this A. M. met "Swan" who at once began to tell us that the Front of the College south Prof House was falling down—went and looked at it. First thought it true, get outside from 2^d Story with "Seaman, Swan and Matthew, all conclude the front Wall of the Windows were sprung out an *Inch*, but on closer examination of myself could find no cracks in Wall or *joints* of Brick open, therefore I saw at once that it was built so—But that fright was so painfull that it laid me up for the remainder of the day—I shall never forget the circumstance.

Saturday, Oct 8 1864

Sent Miss Burness 2 Copies of Tips Life &c.

Wednesday Nov. 9, 1864

Very Rainy Day—Matthew gone to N. Y. on "Williamsburg" Lot business and partly on College sale of Bonds. "Swan" in office this morning Took "Harloe"s Contract for Building Gate-Lodge expect "Renwick today. . . .

Returns from Every Union State of the Election which gives Lincoln an overwhelming Majority. The whole passed off, very Quietly.

Saturday January 28, 1865

Doct Raymond finished the Reading his Report on Organisation this Evening.

Friday March 24, 1865

Doct. Raymond finished Reading and Correcting my Draft of Address to Trustees at next Meeting of Board.

Monday (April) 3^d.

Meeting of Ex Board this morning. see minutes. Telegraph-News this morning 11 O'ck—Richmond and Peterburgh Fallen Great Rejoicings Flags flying and Drums Beating. Rode to Springside this A. M.

Friday April 7, 1865

Burn-Fires & Illuminations to *Night*

Gen^l. Lee—Surrenders his Army at Burks-Station to Major Gen^l Sheridan which substantialy wipes out the Rebellion.

Wm. Nelson, Matthew Doc^t Babcock and wife call^d this evening. D^r Raymond call^d this evening.

Wednesday, April 12th 1865.

Trustee^s of V. F. C. all met except Buckingham, Pierce, Swift, J. G. Vassar, Lossing, Morse, and Swift, see Sec^y Swan—minutes for buisness Transaction.

Promised the Committee on "Ways and Means Kelly, Anderson and Harper to Loan Colliege \$25000 on the Bonds of the corporation at lawfull Interest in sums to suit my Convenience at different Times and the College Neccessities—

All business matters finished up, the Board Adjourned for Dinner at 5 o'ck. Before which M^r Schow distributed my Photograph with College view on back of Cards. I came home & went to Bed, *completely exhausted*, having experienced much of my old complaints, "Swan" had to read my Address.

Saturday April 15, 1865

Awful intelligence this Morning

Lincoln & Seward Assassinated

Both dead, other members of Seward^s family Injured by the Assassins—The whole Country in Sadness and Mourning—our City draped in Mourning—Such is the sensibility & feeling but few persons are seen in the Streets.

Joseph gone with D^r Babcock & 2 Ladies to College.

Wednesday, April 19, 1865

A Memorial Day—A day *never to be forgotten*, people sad, stores all closed, the whole City draped in Deep Mourning. Largest Procession of Citizens ever seen in Po. at 2 Ock P M. Church services held in the Morning. Immense Attendance—D^r. Raymond Dined with us.

Friday, April 21, 1865.

Cloudy, & occasional showers. Remained in house to-day, being quite dizzy.

Wrote Ch^s. A. Raymond Fort Monroe, this morning—Read the Letter to John H. Raymond—D^r Raymond & Matthew call^d this Evening.

Tuesday April 24, 1865.

Cut Magnolia to Decorate Pres^t. Lincoln-Coffin at the R. R. Depo this Evening—Amanda accompany^d Lady Com. down.

Immense multitude supposed 10,000 went to R R depo. Doct Raymond & Amanda Invited into the *Deceased* Car—all superbently draped in Black—where were the Coffins of Pres^t *Lincon* and his son *Willie* Matthew came up this Evening with the Express Train—See paper^s for doings in N Y. Weather very beautiful.

Saturday April 29, 1865.

I am going into my 74 years this morning 5 minutes past 12 O'ck. mid-night. woke and got up by chance at this hour.

Mem. of College matters yet to attended to May 27, 1865.

Gass Light-Burners—Time-pieces—Bells or Gongs, Cabinetts of Insects—Ice House. Span College Carriage Horses & Vehicle or Coach—Floors Oiled—Beds & Bedding, Gass Light in "Observatory"—Class Books for College. Chemical department fitted up—Unfinished Masonry Halls &c. Steps front Entrance—Building for Gynestic or Riding School.

Kitchen Department—Crockery & Cooking Utentials &c. &c. &c. Gass House Roof strengthened &c.

Iron Railing—Gallery of Chapel—Cushions.

ditto In Art Gallery. Unfinished Roads—Painting. Coal. Lighting Rods. Stone steps to Tours. Water Hoses Real^s & Hoses. Equipments for Riding School &c &c &c

Friday June 16, 1865

Sick and tired of College business, no one to help me, Excep "Scow," Doct Raymond & Swan. Buckingham does all he can. Long talk with Scow and Dr Raymond on College Matters.

Saturday June 17, 1865.

Weather very hot Had long talk with Dr. Raymond about "College" affairs, suggested to him my mind about Resigning as Chairman of the Ex Com. he was *surprised* but I ask^d him to consider the matter—this was last Evening & this morning renewed the conversation whereupon he made several important suggestions which see hereafter—Sent my old Carrage to H. W. Morris to sell this morning—Sold at \$100 to Geo. Innis Esq.

Sunday June 18, 1865

Hot very hot, Thermometer 97—Doc^t Raymond spent the morning & Dined with us. Gave him a Letter to Nathan Bishop asking him to accept the Office of Chairman of Ex Com. and that letter informed him of my purpose to Resign

Monday June 19th 1865.

Did not attend Ex Meeting this P M being poorly &c. Weather cloudy, looks like Rain. Amanda went with Joseph to town this P M. Rode down S. Avenue as far as "Constant" new place this afternoon. "Wheeler" 1/4 day work fixing Cottage Windows and Barn Sill, quit at 1/4 4 O'ck came at 1 O'ck.

Morn sold old Carrage to Geo Innis for \$110, after-



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MATTHEW VASSAR

wards "*Innis*" wanted Morris to make a deduction for a split-hub which I refused to allow.

Thursday June 22^d 1865

Weather hot and Sultry Rode to Town this M^{ng} with Amanda—feeling quite poorly &c.—Writing off my Addrefs for the 27th June Meeting to-day.

Sunday June 25, 1865.

Doct. Raymond & Swan spent the day with us. Dined & Took Tea. Weather very hot but clear. Read over my coming Address to the Trustees. Gave M^r Swan Drft of College floors.

LETTERS OF 1860 AND 1861

These letters from the year of organization of the college are addressed to persons who were to play an important part in its future. Milo P. Jewett, the founder of the idea of the college in Matthew Vassar's mind, became the first president. John Howard Raymond, one of the charter trustees, then head of the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute, was the second president of the college. Martin Brewer Anderson, a charter trustee of the college, was President of the University of Rochester. Rufus Babcock was also a charter trustee, a Baptist clergyman who held charges in Poughkeepsie at two different times. Edward L. Youmans, student of science and medicine, was a lyceum lecturer on science, planned the "International Scientific Series", and founded and edited the "Popular Science Monthly", and Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, the "editress" of "Godey's Lady's Book", was one of the leading feminists of the time and the person to whom the Founder addressed some of his most confidential and intimate letters about the college.

These letters of 1860-1861 range over such subjects as the first meeting of the board of trustees, the college investments, salaries, the visits of President Jewett to Brown University, Dartmouth College and Mt. Holyoke Seminary, and over more general themes,—the Founder's common sense theory of education, the mental stimulus of the young, wise control of the pupils, the desirability of a uniform costume for



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MRS. MATTHEW VASSAR

them. They show the excitement of launching a new venture and the smooth progress of the first days of the voyage.

*

Pokeepsie, May 8th, 1860.

Mrs. Sarah J. Hale

Philadelphia

My dear Madame

Having been temporaly indisposed since the receipt of your favor of the 30th Ult. with Encloses must be my apology for delaying my answer to the very kind term in which you are pleased to adverts to my efforts for the promotion of the Education of the young women of our Country. I am honored in finding my own views so much in harmony with the Sentiments found in Editorials of the Ladys Book and will avail myself of an early opportunity to secure the Biographical Dictionary &c. to which you have alluded, to aid me in the more enlarged Sphere in that department of Knowledge

In regard to details respecting the plans, organization &c of "Vassar College", I deem it premature to present to the public anything further than what has already been commented on in those articles furnished you by our mutual friend Professor Jewett now in your hands. I shall be very glad to see in the Ladys Book to which you refer me such suggestions as your mature reflection and practical knowledge of the subject may from time to time prompt you to make

Very respectfully

Pokeepsie, Jan. 24, 1861.

John H. Raymond, Esq.,

Dear Sir:

You will perceive from a copy of the Charter accompanying, that you are appointed one of the Corporation of "Vassar Female College".

Permit me to express the earnest hope that you will accept the trust, and that you will not only give to the enterprise about to be inaugurated the sanction of your name & reputation, but also your best counsel and active support and co-operation.

The first meeting of the Trustees will be held at the Gregory House in this city, on Tuesday, February 26th at 10 o'clock, A. M.

Immediately on the organization of the Board, I shall place in its hands the Funds and Securities which I have appropriated to the College.

At this meeting, measures must be adopted for the custody and management of the College funds, the erection of the Buildings, and the improvement of the Grounds. Needful preliminary and prospective arrangements will also be considered in regard to the Organization of the College.

Hence, it is of great importance that every Trustee should be present.

It is thought that the business may be finished, either in the Board itself, or by reference to appropriate Committees, so that the members may return home, the same evening.

With sentiments of high consideration, I am,

Very truly & respectfully,

Your obt. svt.,

M. Vassar.



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THE PRESENTATION OF THE FUNDS

*

Po'keepsie, March 8, 1861.

Professor Edward Youman

My dear sir

Some weeks since when you were in our City and at my house I personally made my thanks to you for those books, and wished to know the price &c, you earnestly replied that if I would read the first chapter in "Education" headed "What knowledge is of most worth", you would be compensated. Taking you at your word, I am entitled to withhold my thanks even, for I have read the *whole book*, thereby more the cancelling of that debt, and if my appreciation of the value of the work could be reduced to money, the author of it might too soon for the Educational public good retire on a compentense. The views and sentiments therein inculcated are plain demonstrative practical ones, such that any common sense mind might adopt, and just the ones most needed at the present time to counteract the pernicious degenerating principles that are being instilled in the minds of the rising generations of both sexes, dignified by the name of Education.

What is generally taught in schools tends about as much toward discipline, self knowledge, self preservation, or complete living as the fact "My Neighbors Cat Kittened yesterday"—a laughable but excellent illustration.

It was my intention and purpose to have acknowledged your Kindness ere this, but my continued ill health with pressing business claims in the matter of my College enterprise have taken up every moment of my spare time.

I shall allways be verry happy to hear from you on any subject especially upon that of Educational progress & developement.

Yours &c

*

March 22^d 1861

Professor E. L. Youmann

D^r Sir

Yours of yesterday is just received and in reply I think you have presumed on too much to ask permission of me to insert in a public way any extracts from my private correspondence with you, not that I am unwilling to confer the benefit of my pen to *your* service but I fear it would be looked upon as a sort of burlesque by the literati of our Country, a humble obscure citizen presuming to intrude in the ranks of polite literature, yet I am so extremely flattered with *that idea* that I consent willingly if *you can derive* profit from its publication.

Yours very truly

*

May 7th, 1861

M. B. Anderson L L D

D^r Sir

I have enclosed to your address pr mail this P. M. a Copy of the Proceedings of the Trustees of the V. F. College at their first meeting 26 Febray last, also a sample sheet of Letter Circulars, both of which we think handsomely executed.

We are taking all the preliminary steps to commence the College buildings, have enclosed by fencing in an

area of some 6 acres of ground for the Cite, made one contract with the builder, and architect, the former in the sum of \$178,200 and \$5300, this last includes all plans & drawings and superintendence of the work untill completed. We propose to carry up the foundation walls to the first tier of beams this season, the following to enclose the building, the third season finish ready for occupance in the fall of 64. Some delay have occurred on account our national troubles, impairing seriously the market value of our assets. The most depressed of these we propose to lay aside, and use only such as will result in the least sacrifice. Were it not that our expenses for salaried officers &c has been incurred amounting to some \$5,000 pr annum and our Contracts for the Buildings made (altho' the time of commencing them is *discretionally* at the option of the Committee) we might reasonably halt. I think according to the present market value of our assetts we may place to profit & loss account up to the present time \$75000.

We can put up the first Story of the building at a Cost of about \$23000 including first tier of beams. To meet this expenditure we shall have an income from interest account this year of

\$24000

Less salaried Officers &c

\$5000

\$19000

leaving a deficit on this years a/c

\$4000

A *Crisis* is now upon us, whether to halt until the issue of our national troubles are settled, or to proceed, in one respect the turn of public affairs will be to the advantage of the Contractor, enabling him to

buy his materials at reduced prices, also labor will be cheaper, and we may also avail ourselves of a cheap rate of interest by hypothecating our securities (instead of selling) to the amount sufficient to put up the buildings, these and other considerations we have duly weighed, and final resulted in our determination to proceed the work.

How are you progressing with your University Buildings? what proportion of the inside or interior work is completed? Does these stirring times disturb the patronage of the Institution? I predict that after our national troubles are amicably adjusted, our northern educational establishments will be better sustained by our Southern friends than ever.

Please let me hear from you

Yours respectfully

*

21st May 1861

John G. White Esq. Albany

Dear Sir

I address you first as an old friend, secondly as a business man & thirdly as President of the Bank of the "Capitol." Under the first division allow me to say that our acquaintance has been such that if there were any man on Earth whom I regarded worthy of my esteem & confidence it was yourself. Secondly. Your business qualifications through a long course of years fully confirmed me of your capacity for the faithful and honest discharge of all the duties connected with the Bank, and thirdly your position as Director & subsequently its first officer gave it a

character unsurpassed by any other Institution. It was these considerations that induced me mainly to take & hold its Stock, and if among the various assets which I transferred over to the "Vassar Female College" I had been asked which I regarded *best* among them all, I should have placed the Bank of the Capitol the first on the list, but since its suspension a shock has come over me obliterating all confidence in human Institutions, and discourages me to proceed with our enterprise at present for fear that others may also soon share a similar fate; the corporation having lost up to this time by Southern State Stocks and 1st Mortg. RailRoads Bonds &c nearly \$100,000 of their fund and that within the short space of 90 days. May I take the liberty to ask you the question as to the ultimate prospects of the Bank paying its Stockholders.

Please to let me hear from you soon, So that I may lay the matter before our Board.

Yours respectfully,

*

June 14th 1861.

Prof^{es}. M. P. Jewett

Dear Sir

My engagements of this morning necessarily prevented a further exchange of views with you & Matthew upon the matter of our College Salaried officials which were incidentally alluded to this morning, it having previously been hinted but with no especial application to any one, that some line should be drawn constituting the proper charges coming within their especial duties. At the first meeting of the Board of

Trustees on the 26th february it did not occur to me that the Salary of any Officer would then commence, nor were I ever consulted or been apprised in any way that such would have been the Case, it was therefore asked of me at that time by some present if the Committee recommending *your* Salary had consulted with me, to which I replied in the Negative, but the act of the Settlement of your Salary having passed the Vote of the Bord, somewhat hurriedly, I said to my friends I suppose it was all right, as your duties would be both expensive & laborious, to which answer all seemed to acquiese and the presendence of paying Salaries having once began, ground had been broken & opened the way for others to put in their Claims. At that time however, we all expected the work of building & other preparations incident thereto would go forward without delay or as soon as the necessary preliminaries could be made to justify, therefore nothing further was said or done. Since that time great changes in our national affairs effecting our plans & financial means have taken place, and which it were not in the power of the Bord to foresee or reasonably anticipate. In view of these considerations it becomes a question of Enquiry & which will be doubtless instituted at the next meeting of the Bord how far the Executive Committee can be justified in their doings &c I will also here remark that up to the day of the Organisation of the Board nothing had passed between you and me with regard to the amount of your Salary and so I expressed myself at the meeting and when the matter was *hastily hinted* I remarked *I supposed it all right* under the impression that the \$2000 Pr annum included all incidental expenses that might be incurred by you untill

the College was opened for pupils. Now you *Know me* well enough to *Know* that it is far from my purpose to recommend anything short of a generous & liberal construction of those early proceedings at the same time I much desire that nothing should occur to Cause dissatisfaction to you or any of our Official Bord. I send you this brief exposition of my views in order that a fair understanding may be had at next meeting in regard to what constitute proper charges to the College.

Yours truly

June (25th), 1861

C. Swan Esq Sect. "Vassar Female College"

Dear Sir

I am just in receipt of your note of this morning transmitting an official resolution passed by the Bord of Trustees of "Vassar Female College" at their meeting yesterday requesting me as the founder of that Institution to sit for a full lenght potrait by the distinguished artist Charles L. Elliott Esq of New York City, and which potrait is designed to be preserved in the College Edifice.

In reply I would most respectfully return my profound and unfeigned thanks to your honorable Bord for this distinguished Compliment,—personaly I feel it unmerited, and can only consent to the request in consideration of the object and source from whence it emminates. You will please to inform your gentlemen Committee Mess^r M. P. Jewett Prof^r, Doct Nathan Bishop, and Rev^d E. L. Magoon who have the same

in charge that I will be prepared to sit at the artist Studio at any time most convenient to himself.

I am dear Sir,

With great respects

Your obed^t. Ser^t.

M. Vassar.

*

31st August 1861

Professor Edward L. Youman Saratoga Springs

My dear Sir The time is near at hand when we shall be ready for the imposing Ceremony of laying the Corner Stone of the V. F. College 1 Oct^r proximo, and as our views of Female Education are so much in harmony and my health and time are both unfavorable to devote myself in making suitable preparations for that occasion, I have a desire to avail myself of your thought on that subject,—and to request the favor of soliciting the *outline* of an address to be read by me on that interesting and important crisis in the Colleges history. I am happy, very happy to find public Sentiment so favorably impressed with our plan & Enterprise. When our plans were first made public they were met with many discouraging objections, suggestive as to its practicability on so extensive a scale as we proposed, but time & reflection have I am rejoiced to find won for us numerous friends & that from the circle of the most highly educated minds in this Country. We are daily in receipt of Communications from the most distinguished gentlemen & Ladies of both hemisphere's soliciting information of our System & the period of the Colleges commencement

Notwithstanding the financial crisis we have so managed our funds as be enabled to carry forward the College building to the Commencement of the second story and will with part of the second tier of beams completed by the 15th Novbr. The first tier is now being placed thereon. We leave a space open in the Centre ingress or main front door of the building for to place the Corner Stone which on closing up leaves the Edifice Walls completed to the 2^d Story. I shall be happy to have you honor us with your presence on the occasion of that Ceremony of which you will have proper notice hereafter. My purpose of addressing you this morning was as above stated to afford you time to throw together a few thoughts upon the subject referred and I will add such of mine as time and Circumstances will suggest and permit.

My general health is tolerable good but am still suffering a little from an attack of paralysis two years ago. Please to let me hear from you very soon.

Yours truly

P S. I do not expect to tresspass upon your time without some consideration, therefore please to allow me the privelege to bear that in mind.

*

Sept. 5th 1861

Professor E. L. Youmann Saratoga Springs

Dear Sir ·

Your kind note of yesterday is before me, and hasten to reply in the midst of very pressing College engagements. The Committee on the Ceremonies of laying the Corner Stone of the V. F. College have been

confering with Professor Raymond of Brooklyn, D^r Adams and D^r Chapin of N. Y. City to take part in the addresses on that occasion, they had written them without my knowledge. The Honbl. Edward Everett was invited & expected to deliver the address, but other pressing engagements after a delay of some weeks of consideration now prevents him accepting the invitations.

With reference to the preparatory remarks intimated in my last which I wanted you to supply, they must be confined chiefly to the main Subject, "The Female" "her Education" her sphere and availability for the greatest usefulness in life, and the best process to impart it &c. I suppose the whole of the entire Ceremonies ought not to occupy over 3 hours, addresses therefore must be short, but comprehensive &c &c. With these hasty remarks, I part with you untill you proposed visit to Pokeysie.

Yours truly

*

Sept. 11th 1861.

Professor John A. Porter

New Haven.

Dear Sir.

Circumstances have prevented an earlier reply to your kind favor of the 28th Ult.

I fully appreciate the considerations presented touching a visit to Europe by Doctor Fisher our prospective Professor of Chemistry

The advantages to the College would be real, substantial and of great value—aside from the *Eclat* therewith attending.

Under this view I laid your communication before

our Executive Committee which has charge of all questions connected with our finances. After a full discussion, they concluded that they are not at liberty at this point in our Enterprise to Employ any portion of the College funds for the purposes suggested. at the same time it seemed to be the opinion of the members, that after the Professor has been actually appointed, Say next June, or at the latest, in the following February—then the desired aid may be properly rendered.

Permit me to ask would it not be better for Professor Jewett to defer his visit abroad untill the 1st of July next. If the College does not open before Sept^r. 1864, as is now contemplated he would then have two full years in Europe, could avail himself of the latest discoveries up to the time of entering on the duties of his Chair; and could attend to the purchase or manufacturing of such apparatus as must be procured from the old world.

Thanking you for your Kind interest in our institution and trusting that Doctor Fishers wishes will be gratified in due time

I am respectfully

*

Oct^r 11th 1861.

Professor E. L. Youmann Saratoga Springs

Dear Sir I am just in receipt of your favor of the 4th current, but ill health has not permitted an earlier reply, I now would beg to remark that the paper you left with me last month for perusal have been reviewed since you read it over to me, at which time my mind was quite occupied with recent family afflictions and

other exciting interests which rather disqualified me to judge of its merits at that time.

Upon a further examination I do not think it a suitable document for the "Laying of the Corner Stone of the College" it is too elaborate and lacks pithiness & points for such a ceremony, it would be more Suitable for the Opening of the Institution. By referring to my letter of the 31st August you will notice that I merely asked you to throw together a few thoughts as an *Outline* on Female Education, which would perhaps be suggestive of interest, in my opening address on that occasion adding by P. S. "that I would award you some consideration therefore"

However without further preamble I desire to do what is right in the premises, and now ask whether you could reduce this charge within the Compass of the Circumstances which called for the same.

Yours truly.

*

23^d Oct^r 1861

Rev^d Rufus Babcock D D Patterson, N. J.

Dear Sir

I have been considering over the suggestions you were so obliging as to make in relation to *the internal organization* of the educational departments of Vassar Female College, the hints so happily expressed as a *preparatory* Measure ere the institution is fully completed, meets my entire approbation. The idea is a good one viz: as soon as possible prepare a few teachers ready for the dutys of instruction at as early a day after the building is enclosed as possible. In the matter of day pupils I am more and more convinced by re-

flection, that it will never answer. It is just as important that we have our Scholars under our own control as the Colonel of a Brigade when going into battle—there furloughs & passes are never granted without *absolut necessity*. What I regard as an essential element of our Institution is the perfect *Control* of the pupils during the period of their instruction in the College, any thing short of this is a yielding up of our immediate guardianship, while the responsibility remains,—happen what may to these young thoughtless creatures in a moral point of view the College must incur the Odium. As to the Economy of the two plans there can not be a doubt, and it is this very feature in our boarding System that will largely augment the profits, when our large public Hotels secure a certain number of regular borders to furnish *the table*, further addition is *clear gain*.

I would even go further and insist upon a *Uniform* Costume for all the young ladies to be furnished by the College and here again we make a saving to the patrons. I will leave it to your own reflection how easily this can be accomplished by employing suitable persons to contract for the work. I received this morning a letter from Dr Hague apologizing for his inattention to my letters, absence & other engagements prevented, he expresses great interest in our enterprise.

Professor Jewett is still absent, he gives a glowing account of our College enterprise throughout the Country he has visited—it is too long and too flattering for me to relate—suffice to say it meets with highest encomium among the Literati

With much regards I remain Yours truly.—

*

Oct^r 31st 1861.Rev^d Rufus Babcock D D Patterson N. J.

My dear friend. I was duly favored with your kind note of Saturday 26 Current, and were happy to discover that our views in the matter of college discipline were so much in unionson. While the wisest of us are but relatively perfect in the most simple things of human life, it is not strange that *new* and untried experiments should tax our energies to the utmost and after all prove failures. In the management of our Scheme it might be well to diverge a little from the Common track even if nothing is gained *but* novelty. Speaking of *tracks* reminds me of a Capital arrangement adopted some years since on your N. J. R. Road where we can learn the *extraordinary fact* that since its organization 36 millions of persons have ridden in their cars without the loss of life or limb while *occupying their seats*, such fidelity to duty on the part of the Employees has been owing to a liberal bonus paid every three months to such of them whose rout no accident has happened *but* with a *fine* or *dismission* if any thing goes wrong for want of diligence. Let us make a note of this and emulate the carefulness of the very oldest R. R Co in the nation, and the only one who pays "a bonus" to fidelity, not that I would *over stimulate* young brains for I do not believe with the majority of Parents that the more *hours* their children *study* at school the faster *they learn* no more than the larger quantity of food they eat the fatter they grow, or that every hour taken from sleep is *one gained* Such are *not* my views, nor would I contend because the dirtiest children in the Street, are the most hearty and

healthy, therefore cleanliness is a superfluity,—but I do go for *mental stimulus* of some sort and for daily exposure to the pure air in joyous unrestrained activity in spite of rags & filth. And it is with reference to these exercises that I choose the spacious grounds at Mill Cove, but waving further suggestions on modes of discipline I would briefly in my closing remarks say, that my visit to Mill Cove yesterday enables me to inform you that our Workmen will all be discharged from College buildings on the 5th proximo, when the 2^d Story or Basement portion will be completed. The Artists Messrs Elliott and Wright have finished their pictures and we are now engaged placing them temporaly up in the C. B. Church. Prof. Jewett is still absent in his professional tour at the East, his last letter under date the 26 Current was written from Boston, having visited all the Institutions of learning in that City, his next visit is Providence to Browns University, Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary and other Institutions.

Yours very truly.

*

November 13th 1861.

Miss Sarah J. Hale,

Editor of the Godeys Book, Philadelphia.

Dear Madame

I am just in receipt of your esteemed favor of yesterdays date and it gives me great pleasure to notice the deep and continued interest you take in our Enterprise the V. F College, and more especially as its incipient beginning has fallen amidst our great national troubles which absorbs all other minor interest, under

these considerations your kind Co-operation to aid my Scheme comes with peculiar satisfaction all this time. On the 5th Current the Contractor completed the two first sections of the Edifice (Cellar & Basement) including the second tier of Beams, which is one section or story more than we anticipated to do this season, we hope to finish the building by the Spring of 1864 or sooner

Our President M. P. Jewett returned home last Saturday from a Professional tour of a months absence among Eastern Colleges & Schools with reference to the Modern improvements of Instruction &c &c during which time he visited Dartmouth, Havard, Yale & Amherst Colleges, Browns University, the most prominent Female Seminaries in New England including Mount Holyoke, the Boston Schools for Girls, the City Library & Athenaeum of Boston, the Athenaeum of Providence and the Astor Mercantile & N York Historical Society & Libraries of New York. The Libraries of Colleges and Literary Societies with special reference to the Library of V. F. College. The Trustees are also availing themselves of the advantages of these War Times to purchase their Library, Works of Art, Mineral Cabinets &c.

I send you per this days mail the "Pokeepsie Telegraph" in which you will find in its columns under the signature of G. T. R. criticism upon the respective artistic merits of two Life-Size likeness on Canvass of your humble Servant, the first executed by Charles L. Elliott, the second by J. H. Wright both artist of celebrity of the City of New York, the former was ordered by our Bord of Trustees for the use of the College & Cost \$1200, the latter by myself some

year or two ago and only finished a week or two since. This last I purpose for the Bord of Trustees of the Rochester University of which I am a member.

I am obliged to Mr. Godey for his Kindness in sending me the "Ladys Book" had I received it should have acknowledged the favor, I heard from a friend that you had published an article on V. F. C. I could not procure the Number here at our Book Stores, but sent to N. York for One. Please to say to Mr. Godey to send me his "Book" as a regular subscriber, commencing with the October Number, and for which I herewith enclose \$3 in Advance—the Article enclosed to me in your letter I have Caused to be placed in my scrap book with sundry other articles pertaining to the V. F. C.

I remain &c &c

LETTERS OF 1862 AND 1863

As the plan of Vassar develops, Mr. Vassar's correspondence increases in interest and the range of persons to whom the letters are addressed is wider. James Renwick, Jr., to whom the first letter of this section is written, was the architect of the Smithsonian Institute of Washington and of the Main building at Vassar. Samuel Gregory was the founder of the New England Female Medical College, said to have been the first medical college for women in the world. Samuel Austin Allibone was an author, bibliographer and librarian. James Boorman, successful merchant and president of the Hudson river railroad, was a noted philanthropist of the time. Ira Harris, a judge in the supreme court, United States Senator from New York, and professor in the Albany Law School, was also one of the founders of Rochester University. Howard Malcolm, a Baptist clergyman until his voice failed, then became president of various educational institutions, and professor of metaphysics and moral philosophy. Charles A. Raymond was a clergyman, president of Chesapeake Female College until the war, later principal of the Hamilton Female Institute, next a clerk in the office of the Paymaster-General and a chaplain in the army. Becoming acquainted with Mr. Vassar one summer when he preached in Poughkeepsie, he did all he could to impose his own ideas of education upon the Founder, to undermine Mr. Jewett's position and to secure for himself the office of Vice-Presi-



VASSAR FEMALE COLLEGE.

dent.¹ Maria Mitchell was the distinguished astronomer who was made a professor at Vassar. Gilbert Dean was a lawyer, a congressman and justice of the supreme court of New York. Emma Church was an artist of the time and Elias Lyman Magoon a Baptist clergyman known as an art connoisseur and collector.

In the letters of '62 and '63 there are incidental allusions of vivid interest: to the niece of the Founder who first turned his mind, he says in retrospect, to the subject of female education; to the tablet to be placed over the front of the main building; to the growing interest in the project that was bringing scores of visitors to the college. These years were times of increasing difficulties for Mr. Vassar as he perceived more clearly the magnitude and complexities of his project. Problems of finance arising from the war times pressed upon him; anxieties about building plans; rival claims of candidates for appointments in the new college; proposed resignations of trustees; and conflicting theories of education. Not the least interesting of the letters are those that have to do with Mr. Vassar's perplexities in the field of educational theory: his opposition to William Chambers' reactionary views about women; his consideration of Charles Raymond's schemes for the "University" or "Group" System of study; for a sliding scale of professors' salaries adjusted to their success; for the formation of an art gallery by engaging an artist to copy great masters.

But through various discussions and differences, certain large ideas were becoming fixed forever in the Founder's mind: that the good health of the pupils

¹ See "Before Vassar Opened" by James Monroe Taylor, pp. 142-160.

was a fundamental consideration; that a college must be absolutely non-sectarian; and that with the extension of educational opportunities for woman, her opportunities for service must also be widened.

*

Jan^y. 11th, 1862.Ja^s Renwick, Jr.

Dear Sir

. . . .

I think the success of our College depends much upon the reputation it can maintain for the *health* of its Pupils—if thro' bad ventilation sickness should occur it would be ascribed by the public at *Once* to the unhealthy locality of the College and not to the imperfect ventilation. Is it not therefore important that we should at once determine upon the best and improved system before we advance further with the building—what I could desire is to secure a most perfect circulation of pure air throughout the whole building and that its *purification* should not impair its vital and invigorating properties—Can this be done? and how? that's the question, and I want you to give the subject all the additional consideration that your time will permit, ere we finally and fully decide on our plans of heating & ventilating &c. I have now before me several plans for warming & ventilating public buildings, all of which and many more you have doubtless seen as they come especially within the scope of your profession. With the Compliments of this festival season and thanks for your Kindness of the Card to visit the Honb^l W. H. Aspenwalls Gallery

I remain—

*

30th Jan^y 1862.John G. White Esq^r

Albany

Dear Sir It is an old proverb that there is no use of crying over "Spilt Milk" nor can that which is lacking be numbered". I understand from my nephew M. Vassar Jr who has just returned from your City this morning that you were absent, but he had an interview with some of the Directors of the late "Bank of the Capitol" and from all he could learn there would be *but little left* of the Assets after paying the Bill holders and depositors, consequently our College fund of \$8,000 in that Bank is all *entirely lost*, were this my own or were it a corporate property for private emoluments, nothing further could be said or done but quietly submit to the loss, but that a charitable institution for the poor and friendless and destitute Orphan children should be thus so summeraly deprived of so large a Sum is deeply to be deplored, and I would appeal to you and those of your associates in the late Bank wether there is not any means whereby that claim can be saved for the College. God knows the Institution has lost enough by the cursed Rebellion to discourage our Trustees, and had the buildings not been commenced would ceased to have been built for the present. I do hope you will lay this subject before the gentlemen having charge of settling up the affairs of the Bank. I know Mr. Reed, Schuyler and few others will do all they can to save this debt to our College, and I am now confident you will unite your influence in that direction as not *One dime* of the institution inures to individual benefit, but is entirely benevolent in its ends and purposes.

May I not hope that my old friend Mr. White will write me soon, and give me some encouragement in the matter of this enquiry.

I remain

*

February 5th 1862.

Hon^l Geo. T. Pierce

Albany

Dear Sir! I intended had my health permitted to have availed myself of an opportunity of coming up to your City to have conferred with you personally with reference to an amendment of the "Vassar Female College" Charter, so as to secure it from taxation altho' some of its friends are of opinion that it is already exempt under the Revised Statuts with reference to Such Cases. I am perfectly aware that this is quite an unpropitious time to ask the Legislature for abatement of taxes, when the Country is exercising all its energies to adjust a Schedule of Reverses to meet expenses consequent upon this wicked rebellion, yet it would seem hardly just or proper to tax public charitable institutions as is the case of the College as not a dollar of its income or its profits inure to private emolument but is strictly and exclusively a charitable in all its operations, as every dollar of its income after paying expenses of its conductment goes to the gratuitous Education of beneficiaries—moreover the College fund (\$408000) has suffered quite a reduction by the depreciation of its assets consequent upon the war of full 33% of its Capital, add to which fact that the Trustees had made the Contract for the building before the Rebellion broke out and consequently have been obliged to proceed with their work, and dispose

of the funds at great reduction from par Value so that in every view of the case it would seem just & proper that the College should be exempt from all taxation of every kind & nature. Mr Swan has doubtless stated all this matter fully to you and therefore will not enlarge further on the subject.

respectfully

*
February 14th 1862

Sam^l Gregory M D. Sec: N. E. Female Med. College
Boston

Dear Sir Referring to my brief note of the 9th I have now to acknowledge Copies of yours 8th and 12th annual Reports of the New England Female Med. College also Letter to ladies in favor of Female Physician &c all of which I have perused with satisfaction and it gives me pleasure to find that my views on the subject of which they treat are so much in harmony with your published Sentiments. It is a little remarkable that in this enlightened era how the human mind is trammled with old prejudices, and all efforts in a wide Step at progress denounced as fanatical. Job was about right when he told his poor comforters "that no doubt wisdom would *die with them*. Is there any good reason why female should not receive as high a standard of mental Culture in certain departments of Knowledge as males enjoy, nothing but prejudice and Custom as you justly observe hinder this—Woman is capable of higher elevation in these spheres than the notions of Society has hitherto tolerated, and these deprivations are resulting in her degradation especially in our large cities which have drawn

within their vortex so many thousands of young intelligent females seeking honorable employments.

Is it not cruel therefore to impose a large share of intelligence upon any class, and then deny them the *possibility* of its practical benefits—does it not aggravate their condition “If ignorance is bliss it were folly to be wise”, Knowledge must have its appropriate aliment to subsist upon. Woman in the sphere of medical practise especially among her own sex is a happy idea and ought not to be denied to her, and I fondly hope to live to see the day when she will occupy also a place in the refined arts and professions suited to her capacities and moral delicacy as some of her sex are enjoying in the literary world.

It is not the purpose of the Trustees of the V. F. College to establish a medical Professorship but some arrangements will be provided for Pupils who wishes to become practitioner in that department of Study. I congratulate you as one of the early pioneers in this line of human progress and hope your valuable life will be spared to see your object secured and its beneficence universally acknowledged.

With much respect,

*

February 15th 1862.

Professor Jewett

Dear Sir

Since our last interview I have been considering the matter of your visit to Europe and how far the College interest could be promoted thereby, and how far our Bord of Trustees would be willing to bear a part of your Expenses. Without any further

capacity to judge of the advantages to be derived by such a visit than I now possess, and especially in view of the Bord of Trustees willingness to extend its aid to Professor Fisher for a similar object, is there not some fear that both might be defeated. All such incidental benefits as above referred, would be of little advantage unless the Corporation have funds sufficient to erect their College buildings & complete its internal arrangements,—failing in these would result in much greater damage to the Institution than the failure of any one intuitional department, and had I not already suffered so much in my own pecuniary affairs, and my health was sufficiently good to give to it the most perfect supervision, I would not only advise the trip but be willing to defray all extra expenses. My maxim in all human policys is viz: whatever you do, do well—if it is to cut off a limb, do it quickly & thoroughly taking not more time & no less of it than is necessary for the health and good of the patient, so with our College, if once completed and handsomely furnished, Our grounds tastely & nicely laid out, we can then move forward, slowly perhaps, but nevertheless more safely, as is the laws of the natural world, rapidity of growth always presension rapidity of decay—however laying aside these methaphysically illustrations—I am perfectly willing to afford you the opportunity to make the visit and for keeping up your Salary during your absence and I cannot but think that it would rebound greatly to your advantage if you would thus signify to the Bord your willingness to avail yourself of so noble expression of your generosity by bearing your own expenses—if they would continue your Salary.

Yours truly

*

March 5th 1862.Hon^b John Thompson Pokeepsie

Dear Sir

Through a kind intimation from you at the late meeting of our Trustees, I understood that some of your generous and public spirited friends have the Control of a valuable Collection of Minerals, which they may think proper to dedicate to the service of the Community. Permit me to suggest, there is no way in which the present proprietors can confer such distinguished honor on the memory of the deceased Collector and owner of the Collection; no way by which they can give such substantial benefits to the public at large, not only for the present time, but for all future generations, as to present the Collection to the "Vassar Female College" an institution which it is reasonable to expect, will attract Students and patrons and visitors from all parts of our whole united and extended Country and even foreign lands. The surviving friends can build no prouder monument to science and intelligence of their departed relatives, Can give no higher proof of their own enlightened and liberal views. If the donation shall be made to Vassar College, I pledge myself as follows:

1st It shall have a conspicuous place by itself in the mineralogical Department

2. The name of the Collector and late Proprietors with that of the benevolent Donor of the College, shall be displayed in letters of gold over the Collection.

Feeling assured that you will appreciate the im-

portance of the Suggestions, and that you will be most happy to use your influence in carrying them into effect

I am truly Yours &c

*

March 7th 1862.

Ja^s Renwick Jr.

New York

My dear Sir, Your favor of the 4th Inst. is at hand and notice your several remarks, comments &c &c especially with regard to the policy of roofing the College Building the ensuing season and I have only to repeat what I have before expressed that it is my advise so to shape all our arrangements to accomplish that end if possible well knowing it will inure not only to the best good of the Edifice but to the pecuniary interest of the College funds,—when a vessel is half across the ocean with a fair wind, altho' in a leaky condition, it is better to steer for her the first port than to stand still or return back for repairs. I am therefore for going onwards with all that energy as prudence will admit, so as to open the institution at an early day as possible & thus change Outlays for income. You will have doubtless seen Prof Jewett this week ere you left today for Washington. You had better come up next monday, when we can talk over matters with our joint Committees.

Yours &c

*

March 15th 1862.

Rev^d. Hiram Meade

South Hadley Mass.

Rev^d and dear Sir

Being informed by President Jewett of the deep interest in our educational enterprise manifested by

yourself and the Teachers of the Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, and of the kindness and courtesy with which he was treated on the occasion of his late visit to your institution, I take the liberty to express my grateful appreciation of your christian Catholic Spirit by forwarding the accompanying volumns as a donation to the Library of your Seminary. With high admiration of the noble aims and distinguished success of your institution I am dear sir

Very respectfully

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1 Copy of Milman's Latin Christianity half | |
| Calf antique <i>dark</i> | \$16 |
| 1 Copy of Macaulay's Essays half Morocco | |
| gilt | \$12.00 |
| marked Hiram Mead | |
| South Hadley, Mass. Secretary of | |
| the Trustees of the M ^t Holyoke Female | |
| Seminary | |
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*

March 15th 1862.

To the Messr. Vassar Families that now may be living
in East Tuddingham or other parts of the
County of Norfolk England.

Dear Relatives

The bearer Professor Milo. P. Jewett, President of the Vassar Female College, now in process of construction visits Europe on a professional tour in behalf of the Corporators of the above named Institution and especially England and Scotland and is desirous to see the native town and borough where the founder (the

undersigned) was born, and if the Old Homestead is still standing, to make or cause to be made some pencil Sketches of the premises for the purposes of Photographing it, to be placed among the archives of the College.

Any services or facilities you can conveniently render to President Jewett will be regarded as a particular favor by your relative and

Most obed. humble serv.

*

March 25th 1862.

A. J. Drexel Esq^r Banker Philadelphia

Dear sir

At the suggestion of George W. Childs Esq., I take the liberty to forward you a pamphlet containing the proceedings of the First Meeting of the Trustees of Vassar Female College.

I trust you will find these proceedings not devoid of interest to an intelligent and generous mind, fully appreciating the importance of educating the mothers of coming generations.

You will perceive, I have not followed the example of your townsman, Stephen Girard; I prefer to be my own executor and see my money faithfully and judiciously expended under own eye. If God please to spare my life, I hope to witness great & blessed results, flowing from these investments. Permit me to express the desire, that others in your great Metropolis possessing liberal means may have hearts of large benevolence.

With much respect

*

March 26" 1862

Hon^b James Boorman Washington Square New York

My very dear friend

I am this morning in receipt of your Kind favor of the 22^d Current and do not know which to admire most,—the steady unfaltering hand which wielded the pen or the vigorous mind that directed it. At all events there is evidence of one fact—that age nor infirmities have made but slight impressions upon either. Waving further preliminaries of introduction, allow me to say, that I prize your suggestions in the matter of Stock Investments very highly and shall not be in haste to part with mine or the College H. R. R. Bonds seeing you still hold no less on your account than 45000 dollars in the latter,—true as you justly remark “Our Confidence is greatly shaken in *all* human Securities by the destitution of moral principles in those we have confided, but then the absence of any virtue proves that it does exist *Somewhere*, let us hope therefore for the best.

It was a singular coincidence that your old friend Peter Cooper Esq^r should happen just the time to be talking over the reminiscences of past years and that on the very evening previous, and more especially should have occasion to allude to the trifling incident of selling me a “Woolen Shearing Machine” as my thoughts had just then been rambulating over that period of my life. The fact was, that it was my brother in Law Geo Booth an english manufacturer residing in Pokeepsie whom negotiated for the Machine, but as I was interested in the Establishment I paid Mr Cooper for it. Booth was the first man that up a

Woolen Carding Machine in the State of New York. "Slater" of Providence R I. was the first to put up one in America. I think this was about the year (I may be mistaken in the precise date) of the great Eclipse of the Sun 1806). So far at least you were right that I was devoted to clothing "Outward Man" but my chief business for most part of my life was with "John Barley"-Corn by Joe John "and now in my latter days am striving to enlarge the facilities of the Moral and intellectual man" and only regret I did not begin my work sooner. I trust however that the Cistern will not break nor the fountain be dry" untill I have accomplished my plans & purposes on earth. It is as you justly remark "a melancholy reflection to look over our distressed Country, what a sad commentary upon human wisdom, what immeasurable depths of misery have a few months of this Rebellion entailed upon this once happy land my heart feels sad in its contemplation and where it not for the truth that the "Lord God omnipotent reigneth" should soon be discouraged. You have been pleased to allude Cojointly to Mr. Cooper and yourself and associated my name with you in trying to *do something* for the good of posterity. Mr. Girard left a fund of \$2,000,000 of which portion (perhaps say 2 to 300,000 he would have deemed sufficient) was to be used for the erection of a plain substantial building void of ornament" the interest of the ballance was to support the Institution. All but 8,000 dollars of the principal (i.e. \$1,992,000) was spent in the erection of a splendid palace and out buildings (and this item of Expense has since been increased) fortunately for his design he bequeathed *all* of his Estate that might be needed for

its Execution. In the Peabody Institution at Baltimore vast Sums have been expended in buildings which could (I think) been better used. What a Contrast this with Coopers benevolence (see Sec^{ty} Henrys Report of the Smithsonian institution just published. The Smithsonian Institution at the City of Washington which was established for the benefit of mankind, is not a national Institution as many suppose, but the Government is merely a Trustee to carry out the design of the Testator. The amount of that Bequest was (I think) some half a Million of dollars. It holds perhaps from $1/3$ to $1/2$ of its funds in Southern State Stocks, how much of it will be realised time can only determine. John Lowell Jr of Boston profiting by the Errors of others, directed that *not a dollar* should be invested in 'Bricks and Mortar' of his bequest, consequently the Capital remains to afford a large income, and rooms are hired for Lectures,—but I will not tax your patience any longer. Should you be visiting Po! I should be happy to have you call and see me, as much so as a sovereign Known as a Sovereign.

Your most obed Se

*

March 26" 1862.

D^r S. Austin Allibone, care of Geo W. Childs 628
and 630 Chestnut St. Philadelphia.

My very dear Sir

I were just duly in receipt of your Kind letter of the 21st inst. with enclosures, and if there is any one thing more than others to encourage my hands and heart in the enterprise that I have so long cherished and have now begun to execute the Vassar Female College it is

just such generous heartfelt responses of approval from gentlemen holding such position in life as yourself. I cannot express to you how happy it makes me to receive such high testimonials of my poor efforts in behalf of humanity, and I beg your fellowship at the throne of Grace that all things will work together for its full and final completion.

It is a sad commentary upon the Wisdom of man to witness such wasteful prodigalities of Estates like Gerards & others so ruinously misapplied & lost, and if there is any one fact that will impress our wealthy citizens to become their own Executors it will be such examples as you have cited. Referring to your enclosed article "Robert Chambers in America" I have carefully perused the paper. William Chambers I have had the honor of a short acquaintance as well as of some correspondence (1858) before I commenced my College, but it so happened he afforded me but little encouragement, and he took the pains after his return to Scotland to have his reasons put in type, like your "Cut me off and pass me round" and among other prospectus enclosed of Scottish institutions for the Education of young ladies, one in "Moray Place" Edingburgh he says was a sample—pupils numbering about 120—but it did not succeed well, and then asks would it not be well for me to consider whether any gigantic Collegiate Establishment would not be liable to fall into the common Error! but I will quote the whole of the second paragraph of this letter.

"The plan of boarding and educating young persons of either Sex in large beneficiary establishments has latterly attracted much serious consideration in Edingburgh, which possesses a

“ number of institutions of this nature. The more
 “ closely the working of these institutions has
 “ been examined, the less reason is there to be
 “ satisfied with the principle of seclusion inherent
 “ in their arrangements and it is now a pretty
 “ general belief that it would be a blessing to the
 “ Country if they were all abolished, and their
 “ funds appropriated to general purposes of edu-
 “ cation. Such being the case, the proposal to
 “ establish, somewhere in the United States, an
 “ Establishment for the board and education of as
 “ many as 5 or 600 girls, fills one with astonish-
 “ ment and consternation. Let me endeavour to
 “ point out briefly the defects to which all such
 “ establishments must necessarily be subject ” He
 then proceeds to give his reasons, but being too lengthly
 to transcribe in this letter, I must omit them.

You have been pleased to allude to your making a
 Visit to Poughkeepsie which I sincerely hope you will,
 I should be happy to have you call upon me—my
 health is somewhat feeble but hope to improve as the
 warm season advance.

I remain, &c

P S. I return you the Slip cut from the “ American
 and Gazette ” of 22^d Sept^r 1860 as per request. I
 should however liked to retain it as it is a better ac-
 count of the Chambers, than I have seen published.

*

March 31st 1862.

Js. Renwick Jr.

New York

Dear Sir At a Meeting of the Executive Bord
 of the V. F. College this morning it was suggested

that you inform me at an early day, what materials and size you would propose for the *Tablet* over the Front Centre Entrance, whether in Marble or granite, whether the Letters be raised or sunk, thus:

ERECTED A D 1864
MATTHEW VASSAR FOUNDER

The inside Tablet on Front Hall main Centre Entrance to be of pure white marble—on one side the names of the Trustees, on the other Side Architect and Builder with the round Cost of \$200,000

Over the Centre Front Entrance would be placed a Tablet of Granite Stone, with Sunken letters & Gilded.

VASSAR FEMALE COLLEGE.

if you have any other Suggestions to make, please to state in your reply.

Yours truly

P. S The Sketch of the College Office is received, but no action taken upon it today.

*

April 11th 1862.

Js. Renwick Jr.

Dear Sir I am this morning in receipt of your favor of yesterday, and notice your suggestions concerning the kind of materials to be used for the *Tablets* in Zinck, this is a new idea, and it strikes me favorably. By refering to my note of last Evening you will find the different Estimates for Granite, Italian Marble &c but I am not sure but Zinc would be preferable to any other materials. It is always safe to follow the

footprints of experience. You say Zinc is entirely used in France & Belgium for exterior metallic decorations! why not then should we not adopt it? however let us ascertain the difference of Cost between the different materials & then we can decide with better power of judgment &c Harloe has uncovered the College walls, and commenced laying bricks. My time in the Office have been more than usually employed since our Professor Jewett sailed for Europe. I do hope that the cold windy season is now past and that we will have an early spring as Mr. Harloe will require a long favorable building Season to roof the College ere the Snow & frost of next fall sets in. I send to your address per Mail this P. M. a Copy of the Am. Journal of Education, in the pages 52, 53, 54, 55 and 56 you will find a brief synopsis of my early life &c, on Frontpiece an engraved likeness of your humble Servant by W. Wright Smith Boston. I regret to see so poor a print of our College Edifice. The printer and not the *Wood Cut* was in fault. Please to let the Professor, your honored father, see this number. Other matters have crawled out of mind (for the present at least) the Office project; will take it up soon again. As we began our College building at the beginning of the american Rebellion, it would be quite significant incident if it should be finished at its close "Historical Emblems of Peace and War A D 1862.

Yours very truly

P S. You had better come up on Monday

*

April 24" 1862

Honb^l Ira Harris.

Dear Sir My delay to acknowledge your Kindness in sending me the public documents is not the less appreciated by that circumstance.

The Smithsonian Report of 1860 and the Colorado Exploring Expedition &c came to hand by due course of mail, and yesterday I received a Second Smithsonian Number of 1860 which was also under your signature upon the rapper. These publications will be very useful additions to our V. F. C. Library. We are availing ourselves of these peculiair times to buy scarce and valuable works, and for that object have set apart a fund and placed it in the hands of Special Book Agents in New York and Boston.

Our President M. P. Jewett was also provided with some Moneys to purchase rare works in Europe if offered at very low prices.

We are progressing finely with the College building, shall have it roofed in the present building season say by the 1st Decbr and notwithstanding the deplorable Rebellion so depressing to all stock Security^s we hope to escape without any very serious loss and to finish the Edifice within the time contracted for viz: 1 June 1864.

We are daily receiving letters from distinguished individuals commendating our enterprise, and within a few days, the following among others Professor Wm. H. Allen LL.D President of Gerard College

Professor Coppie
Honb^l Alex: Henry,

University of Pennsylvania
Mayor of Philadelphia

Jas. J. Barclay Esqr	Athenaeum
A. J. Drexel	Banker
S. J. Dreer	ditto
Professor Ingersoll LLD	
Geo. W. Childs	Publisher &c &c &c

I allude to these facts to show in what Estimation our Female College is regarded by the public.

I shall be pleased to hear from you whenever you can spare a moment from your pressing public engagements.

Yours very truly.

*

May 16th 1862.

Rev^d Howard Malcolm D D Leverington Pa.

My very dear friend

This is truly an age of *Wonders* and you have contributed to the Stock. I had almost given up ever hearing from you direct, *indirectly* I have several times since we met some year or thereabout ago, when you officiated so conspicuously with me in the Breaking of Ground for our College, were you present with me now, you would scarcely realise the amount of materials piled up upon that spot. We are about ready for the 3^d tier of beams, but I decline saying more on this point for I want you to come & see for yourself; if you would, the Society for gathering musty old books, &c would be put into the Shades. By the bye, I have quite a lot of Old books, Magazines, pamphlets which I will contribute to your Wonderful Historical Society which I can better spare than money, for this terrible Rebellion have swept away a large amount of

my income, however I will place my name among your collections in some way soon

I send you by this day mail the March Number of the American Journal of Education, where you will find a steel plate engraving Likeness of your humble Servant, with a brief Outline of his early history with a short Statement made by me on the occasion of the endowment by the V. F. College in February 1861.

Our friends Mess^r Jewett & Brackett have safely landed the other Side of the Water and are receiving letters from them frequently.

Yours in haste

*

June 11" 1862.

James Renwick Jr. Esq^r

Dear Sir I was out to the College yesterday but *did not see* either Harloe or DuBois but *I did see* *some things* which I thought not *exactly* up to the *spirit* if not the letter of our contract viz: I do not think that "Donnelly" is sufficiently particular with his bricklayers, they do not fill up the intertices of the brickwork with mortar to insure a strong wall. *Secondly*, I find that the window frames are being put in without being painted. *Thirdly* They continue *occasionally* $\frac{3}{4}$ quarter front coarse brick notwithstanding your caution to *Donnelly*. Now I know you are not disposed to have any work or materials in the building falling short of the Contract, nor do I believe it is M^r Harloe^s wish, but it is rather the results of carelessness on the part of the workmen, and I mention these facts not in the spirit of *Captioness* or *fault finding* but with a desire to avoid any formal cause of complaint

which such defects might ultimately result in viz: still larger innovations of our agreement, but the main object of this note is to request that you would bring up the Plan of the Gate House when you next time visit Po—I think we ought to build the Lodge this Summer especially if Harloe can do it.

It is a little remarkable how the Litterary worlds attention is drawn to our Enterprise these tumultuous *war* times, but such is the fact, I am almost daily in receipt of Communications from all parts of the Northern States making enquiries about our Institution when it will be opened for the reception of Pupils &c &c. Thus you see we are quite a “Star” in these calamitous times. A gentleman of some notoriety called upon me yesterday from Washington DC. making enquiries & is going out to day to see the grounds & buildings.

Yours truly

Poughkeepsie, N. Y., July 8th 1862.

M^{rs}. Angelina G. Weld,

Dear Madame!

Your extremely interesting and intelligent letter of the 15th inst. came duly to hand, and it is truly gratifying and refreshing to ones feelings amidst the deplorable sad times upon which our beloved country has fallen to discover such noble instances in your sex appreciating and encouraging our hands and hearts in the establishment of an Institution for their own special elevation &c. I am no monomaniac nor enthusiast who by dwelling long on a *single idea* have arrived at certain results, for most part of a long life (now passed three score and ten years) I have spent in business

pursuits and while thus engaged, especially in the latter part, I were providentially lead to the reflection & consideration of *Female* Education, in the first instance through a niece of mine whom God in his Providence had left Fatherless and destitute of means for support; and thus obliged in early life to seek employment for a livelihood among strangers far away from her native home in the southern part of the State of Virginia, for several years she devoted herself in teaching in a private Gentlemens family, subsequently returned to Po'keepsie and opened a Female Seminary in this city—This I had almost said was the first Institution of the kind North of the Highlands on the Hudson River, and now at the present moment numbering some half dozen or more well supported Female Institutions; this dear Niece several years since departed this life in the full hope of a blessed immortality. I am lead to trouble you with these thoughts from the consideration that the introductory portion of your note before me speak of *your early life* much in unison of my Niece's history—she also was “tempted to live a fashionable & frivolaus life”, she found education *too* at a low grade in Virginia and rejoiced to return once again to her friends at the North, and sought a position where she could be a blessing to her Sex and to the world.

How wonderfull are the ways of Providence, what little incidents turn the whole spheres of human destinies. As it regarded myself I know nothing nor thought nothing about education, having been born in a Country or a portion of it where the parents as a general thing considered it only a Waste of time, and money to impart it, but to save further detail in this

letter I send you per this days mail the March number of the "American Journal of Education" where you will find a *very* brief sketch of my early history. You have been pleased to refer so kindly to the great work I have undertaken infusing your own inspirations and prayers for its successfull issue. In regard to your friend Miss Lucia E. Sheppard, I shall cause her name to be registered (on the Books of applicants) in the Institution to be referred to again on the return of our President from Europe and shall do all in my power to serve you and her in your united wishes.

Allow me Mrs. W—in parting to add, that, I thank you most cordially and kindly in all the deepest sincerity of my heart for the high testimony of appreciations in which you hold and speak of the V. F. C. enterprize etc. and do desire your earnest and devout participations with me at the Throne of Grace that this beneficent work for the elevation of woman may be crowned with the blessings of God for its successfull issue etc.

I remain very Respectfully

Yours etc.

M. Vassar.

*

July 30th 1862.

Rev^d Charles Raymond

My dear friend. I thank you very Kindly for your valued favor of the 15th current. Your suggestions concerning the plan of organization of officials in the V. F. College are deserving much attention and the more I have reflected and studied them the more

they have commended themselves to my judgment and approbation &c

I now specially allude to the Office of Vice President, but hope that the discussion of this question or any other between you and me on the subject of the organization of the College or its discipline, may be examined and freely discussed independent of any sinister motives, and *candor* impels me to say and acknowledge that thus far you have evinced the utmost impartiality and unselfishness. It is now however a proper time for me to express my *private thoughts*, therefore I assume the authority to *express them* that I know of no man whom in my judgment could fill the place of the V. P. better than yourself nor one in whom I could most cheerfully concur in that appointment and after writing out my views somewhat in detail on this subject to our President Prof. Jewett in my last letter, I thus signified my *opinion* and my *wishes*. However this matter must now remain open for further reflection and action untill Prof. Jewett return when we shall take it up again, and within the present year may be able to make you a proposition that will meet your entire approbation—my reasons I shall assign for advocating your appointment to *that* department in the College that the “Suggestion” of such an office *first* came from you, *Secondly*, that your large experience in Female Education entitles your opinion and judgment to more than ordinary consideration. There is a philosophy common to us business men, never to loose a good *paying* customer, we often Classify on our Ledger our *patrons*, to the poor *paying ones* we are *always short* of the *article*, to the good *paying ones* never. Now apply this rule to our College working plans of Teachers

there are those who are not only qualified to teach but can exert an influence in the Institution more than equivalent to the compensation they may receive, for I hold it to be a demonstrative *fact* that if our College rise to meet the public largest claims and expectations it will be through its *moral* and *religious aspect* rather than its *intellectual*, for as you justly remark, we have had experience enough in the latter "Good general theories of education *are good* as far as *they go*, but we want more *practical life invigorating Knowledge* specimens of which may here and there be seen altho' not a *graft or scion* from a *College* or a *University Stock*. I need not however extend my remarks on this subject your experience of 18 years to the Profession of teaching "Young ideas how to shoot" will amply qualify you to judge collectively about such matters, and I am happy to think that my friend Mr Raymond have not only a *supply* of the *comodity* (of good Tuition) but know how to impart it. Now, I am ready for a "Barter of your Wares" they will allways be needed and you have an abundant supply, and the College has the means for exchange of *Comodities* with you, besides they have *Scites* on which to erect comfortable residences for their Professors—this last suggestion I am also indebted to you for, by the adoption of which much room would be saved in the College buildings for subordinate Instructors, Pupils &c besides surrounding the College and Grounds with a cordon of defences both of ingress and egress against intruders on the premises, but I have already extended these remarks beyond my original object, which was simply to acknowledge your favor, leaving all comments for a private interview. We shall be happy to

see you when convenient with your friends. With my best regards to Mrs R. and the new Stranger.

I remain dear Sir Yours truly

*

August 30th 1862 (sent 1st Sept 1862)

Rev^d Rufus Babcock DD

My very dear Friend

I received your Kind note dated at "Rustic Point" R. I. yesterday P. M. and notice your pleasant rustications with your family for the past two weeks upon the sea-board, many of our Citizens of Po' have been enjoying these summer repasts, it is reported that all the "Watering Places" &c have been full to overflowing. A few days since Mr Swan Amanda & Self took a run up to the "Columbia Springs," on our arrival found all "full to overflowing" we then started for the Catskill Mountains house by private conveyance and to our great surprise found some 150 guests waiting for their turn of accommodations, some had been patiently or rather *impatiently* waiting some 2 or 3 days for apartments, we had our own *private* conveyance and therefore could return at our pleasure, others were dependant on *public* conveyances, and must wait their *turn*—availing ourselves of our own wise provisions made our way back to Hudson, and thence home by Railway, only absent some 4 days. The above will be the *Key* to the versions of "a good friends" report of our visit to the Saratoga Springs"

I have noticed your purpose visiting "Maria Mitchell" the great Astronomer with reference to her engagement in the professional capacity in the V. F.

College, and will report results after your return to "Patterson". Also notice your intentions of visiting the University at "Cambridge"—remarks on the Miss Plummers professorship &c all of which information may be a *negative* if not a *positive* benefit to us,—for there is as much *benefit* derived in seeing *defects* as *perfection* in any system! It is our purpose to start from the latter point, then *advancement* is *improvement*. There are *copyist* and there are there are *originals* in Literature and in Mechanics.

As our College buildings looms upwards to the Sky, its architectural beauties attracts attention. The peculiarity of the materials and style of arrangements gives solidity and chastity. Every pleasant day brings its scores of visitors, and I may also add every mail brings letters of inquiries for *post* or *places* in the institution. About a month since a gentleman friend of mine met me and in brief conversation about College matters says, that it was the Current report that the Bord of Officials in V. F. C. were all appointed, and that from *Baptist ranks*, this I at once *contributed* there was but two appointments made, the President and a professor in Chemistry. It is remarkable how disposed the public are to make the College *Sectarian*. I do hope therefore that whatever may be the *peculiar* results of the organization of the College boards of professorships &c it may not be *prematurely* announced as all the *disappointed* will be but lukewarm friends, if not a step further in advance, open *enimys*. I started to have V. F. College *Catholic* in the widest sense of the term, we are closely watched by denominational *School interests* in Po'—some *catch* at every movement of the Board that they can twist into line to subserve

their own ends. The Methodist with all the sectarian elements are hardest to coalesce. Letters from Prof. Jewett last advices are dated Wiesbaden Germany August 3^d. Brackett still accompanies him, the latter has never written me since he left home. Mr J. leaves nothing *unseen* thats *worth seeing* that will be of benefit or interest to the College. Prof. Fisher is with them, has wrote for funds \$500 to purchase chemical Instruments, our Board has agreed to furnish it. Ch^r A Raymond made a visit to Hamilton last week, has conditionally taken the large Academy Edifice (females) of that place, engagements if consumated will be just the place for him.

I must now close my remarks as our Executive Board will be Soon in Session. At your convenience please to favor me with a line. My best regards to your family (whom I presume are near you) I remain

*

Sept^r 22["] 1862.

Rev^d Rufus Babcock DD.

My dear Friend

Your highly esteemed favor of the 8th and 10th current Came duly to hand and would have received earlier acknowledgment had not the intermediate time been occupied almost exclusively by hourly calls of Visitors from abroad to see the founder and the Edifice of the V. F. College, which must be my apology for deferring an answer to your Kind and intelligent notes above referred to, and which I have just taken up again and reviewed this morning & with primitive freshness of interest. Your visit to Nantucket, Havard University, the Plummers Institute, Cambridge, with

the high testimonials accompanying your letters in behalf of Miss Mitchell as a teacher of Astronomy &c^a in our Institution with the appreciated prospects of securing his services in that department with other valuable information obtained through your visits for the benefit of the College will be laid before our Executive Committee at their next regular meeting. Enclosed please find \$10 bill of the Farmers & Manufact^{rs} Bank of this city no. which I sent you to cover expenses incurred on acct. of your visits as above stated in behalf of the College. I would extend my remarks, by quotations from Prof. Jewett's late letters also from our Nephew J. G. Vassar, our friend Rev^d Ch^s A. Raymond now at Hamilton with some account of visits from Miss Dr Emily Blackwell N. Y., Editors of N. Y. Evening Post, "Home Journal", Miss Doct^r Harriett R. Hunt of Boston &c &c, the latter had addressed me a very respectable, dignified and sensible letter upon the Education of her sex &c. I have at last received a letter from Mr Brackett but have not leisure to comment this morning. Your good wife call^d upon twice last week. have not as yet seen your Daughter Harriett

Our family healths Continue much as usual. I remain dear friend

P S Amanda wishes to be Kindly recommended to you

M. V.

*

Octr. 2^d 1862.

Rev^d Chr. A. Raymond

My dear friend Your very highly esteemed favor of the 22^d to the 25th Ultimo incl: with enclosures came

duly to hand and have given the same a careful perusal which it justly demanded. Passing over the introductory portion which chiefly relates to my *personally* self I proceed at once to notice your wise practical suggestions concerning the peculiar feature of our College organization and its management and in getting on to this ground I am perfectly aware of my ignorance to lead, and perhaps my folly even to suggest any thing new—yet relying upon a long life observation and experience in the Common business affairs of the world I may have gathered up some Knowledge that may have escaped thro' their apparent insignificiency, the minds of the more learned. Not wishing or expecting to anticipate your views intimated in your letter before me I will merely remark that the more I have reflected upon the employment of an organized salaried Corpse of Teachers the more decided and conclusive have my mind been convinced that it will be the identical shoal our College bark will strike and if not opening a seam wide enough to sink her, will at least so much impair her seaworthiness as to demand frequent repairs—with this nautical illustration (which please to excuse) I proceed to say that in my judgment every Employee from the highest to the lowest grade should in some way or other be dependent for stipend more or less upon their own exertions, and the only complexity of the Case is the mode of its arrangements. Without something of this Kind is *done* the V. F. C. begins and ends just where all its educational predecesors have and that very frequently disastrously. The first instinct of our race is *Self* make the promotory of that the chief object and there is no difficulty of finding

Energy & Talent. Now then, who have we amongst us to draw up a programme on an just equitable Sliding Scale, so that every labourer get the equitable reward of his toil, thats the Problem to be solved, can Mr Raymond effect this? if so, I should like to secure his services.

I have had no little experience in the philosophy of adjusting remuneration for labour. On one occasion I employed a man by the month to sell Ale in N. Y. for the Company, but as the pay was *sure* there was no stimular or incentive for exertions. I then tried the System of Commission pr barrel, then they made money and I lost, as they gained bad debts, I then made a new bargain viz: gave him a certain percentage on all the Ales *sold and money collected and paid over*, this nail was a clincher, and from thence forward all went well, he was careful to sell only where he could collect, and collect just when he wanted it. If I give a man my farm to work on Shares, I am very sure he will do the best he can for both of us—it is his *interest*, and thats the conclusion of the whole matter and which is just the substance of your views, the *reciprocate* System. Set apart from the Endowment fund, a specfic Sum to keep the buildings in good repair and for the gradual improvement of the College grounds & furniture, Library & philosophical apparatus, the interest of which annually to be expended, a professorship & Teacher Fund graduated by the Success of their own efforts in appropriate proportion. Set apart a fund to be known & distinguished as the Beneficiary fund for respectable poor but promising talented young girls whom will do honor to your Institution.

Specific Appropriation Funds.

For improvements of Grounds.

“ “ “ Building & repairs

Furniture fund.

Library & Philosophical Apparatus fund

Professor & Teachers Fund

Beneficiary Fund

but after writing all as above I find on reading over your letter I have suggested nothing new, it is much the same as your own plan. Let me have it from your pen elaborated.

I now come to that part of your letter under date the 25th, Thursday. It is needless for me to say that I am heartily glad to learn that your good wife and children (or Babys as you call them) have *all* met with you in safety. I say *all*, I presume you have not omitted to count & chalk^d as they arrived. You speak of the agreeable shock the Pok Check afforded you, if your *Case needs* another of the Kind, frankly write me and it shall be forthcoming, if I have the funds on hand.

Amanda has read over your letter to me at least three times, and wants another chance, she takes a deep interest in your welfare, and wants me to promise you a visit the next festival Season.

Now for the last three days I have been laid up with a severe cold I have made out to scribble off the foregoing, but was so unintelligible that I got our Mr. Schow to copy it.

I shall leave a little space for Amandas remarks, so I take my leave of you this afternoon. God be with you my friend and prosper and Keep you & yours during his good pleasure is the prayer of your friend

M. V.

P. S. We have some friends and relatives from Auburn visiting us this morning which will prevent Amanda from adding anything to this note, but she wishes me to say that she is looking for that long promised letter as she is anxious to know if there is any "Bathing Facilities" like those at V. F. College Institution. Amanda sends her love to your good wife and Laura, and was disappointed in not seeing them before their departure, but hopes to make you a short visit next summer when I come out to meet with our Bord Trustees of Rochester University Anniversary.

Yrs. M. V.

*

Oct^r 25" 1862

Rev^d Chr. A. Raymond.

My dear friend. Your valued favour of the 4" current would have received earlier attention but temporary illness and many claims upon my time in consequence of the late fire of our Malt House Buildings &c. I have taken the earliest opportunity to look over and examine your letter setting forth your plan of the working process of our College Institution and while in the main I highly approve of it, yet it admits of some modification on the Sliding Scale upon which the respective compensations are based. As it now stands it possibly might carry the Salaries of President and Prof^s entirely too high,—take for instance the first officer y^r President at 200 pupils his share would be \$4,166.66 suppose there is 400 pupils then his portion would be \$8333.33: now while I grant that the operation of the plan is an incentive to *industry* yet the *self interest* principle should not all inure to the Em-

ployees benefit but rather be reciprocal or divided between them and the College. But I have not time this morning to suggest a better plan if I *could*, shall therefore leave the subject for further reflection. Allow me to thank you for the present very kindly for your valuable suggestions, long before our College goes into operation I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you when we can talk over more fully all matters connected with the working of the Institution. At present I am much engaged in Scheming and planing for the warming & ventilating the building—it has taxed our Architects & all our Building Committee ingenuity to the utmost. Some goes hot water, others Steam, others hot air, all has more or less their intrinsic merits, none quite as perfect as we wish. I consider that upon the degree of this success (heating & ventilation) depends the ultimate popularity of the Institution, Once the reputation established of being unhealthy (not matter from what cause) we greatly suffer—physical well Being must stand foremost no matter how good otherwise y^r Institution. I do not expect to make *Wistliz* out of pigs tails or to give new *constitutions* to organic Invalids but one of the chief objects of our College is to impart healthe while we impart Knowledge only adding that I think your system is somewhat if not entirely original, at any rate it meets my views and I think it will our Presidents although striking at the root of Endowments for Professorships. As Amanda have received (yesterday) your kind letter she will answer it shortly, in the mean while please to accept our united thanks.

Truly yours.

*

Oct. 29 1862.

Miss Maria Mitchell Lynn Mass.

Dear Madame.

I have on several occasions had the pleasure to hear your name mentioned at the Annual Meetings of the Board of Trustees of V. F. College as the most suitable person to fill the important Office of Professorship of Astronomy and an increased interest has been manifested since your interview with Dr Rufus Babcock, whom has been quite desirous that our Institution should avail itself of your valuable services in that department. You will please to excuse me when I say as the Founder of the College that I feel the deepest anxiety for the successful occupancy of that Professorship, and believe there is no one in our Country can better insure it than yourself. No official appointments in the Institution has been made other than the Presidency & Professorship of Chemistry—nor will there be untill Professor Jewitt return from his professional European tour next Spring. We are progressing finely with our College building it is receiving its roof and the whole Edifice will be completed within the time contracted viz: 1 June 1864—

In a few days will send you a copy of the New Englander containing an article on our College Enterprize. I have not seen it as yet, but I have heard it well spoken of by others—

I am dear Madam

Yours very respectfully

*

Novbr 21st 1862.

Miss Emma C. Church

Care of Freeborn & Co Bankers Rome

Dear Madame, I have been requested by Prof. M. P. Jewett L. L. D. President V. F. College to address you upon the subject of certain pictures painted and to be painted by you for the above institution, four copies from originals which he informs me he has engaged of you & others he is desirous to have executed for the College account, the first order have been approved by our Executive Committee, and you will find to your credit at John Monroe & Co Bankers Paris, Bills of Exchange for the payment of each picture as may be delivered to that house agreeable to Prof. Jewetts Order, and who will forward each to us as received by them.

After the first specimens are received, they will be submitted for inspection of the Board of Trustees of the College at their annual Febry. meeting, whom will then decide upon their merits, and I will write you the results. It affords me much pleasure to inform you that Prof. Jewett speaks in the highest terms of your genius, personal, spotless and purity of character, and of the many warm friends you have in Rome which gives weight & additional value to your pictures. Should your first specimens be approved by the Bord you may reasonable hope for an order for the Art Gallery of the College of some few thousands Dollars to be executed from Originals representative pictures to show the Characteristic exellency of your greatest master by an American Lady Artist. The subject of such copies, form & color will be left to your discre-

tion, and especially the canvass, which is of the utmost importance. Great complaints are made in America by the use of cheap & useless canvass which after a year or two crack and the picture becomes worthless. We trust you will have particular regard to this part of your work as that also of the kind & quality of the other materials. With my best regards I am dear
Miss Church

Yours respectfully

Post Script to Emma C. Church's letter of 12th December.

On the Eve of mailing the within letter received advices from Prof Jewett informing us of his purpose to close up his european tour at Rome or Naples on a/c of the enormous rate of Exchanges, this letter has therefore been retained that he might see the contents before sending it to you which circumstance will explain the decrepency between the date and its receipt by you. Prof. Jewett will write you by an early mail.

*

November 25, 1862.

Miss Maria Mitchell, Lynn Mass.

Dear Madame! I am just in receipt of your letter of the 22^d Inst: and owe you an apology for my remissness. I now send you the Copy of the "New Englander" with a few Pamphlets of the Proceedings of the Board of Trustees at their first meeting, which I trust will reach you in due course of mail.

I am very happy to learn that you are taking so much interest in V. F. College Enterprize by watching

its progress &c. This day completes the roofing, our Edifice is now enclosed from Storms & Winds. During the winter we do all work that can safely be done at those seasons. There is every prospect of completing the whole Edifice by the Summer of 1864.

I have the pleasure to inform you that President Professor Jewett will be home by the 1st proximo. The State of the Country & Exchanges have induced him & several other americans to shorten their journeyings. I shall at all times be happy to hear from you.

Yours truly,

*

April 23^d 1863.

Honb^l Gilbert Dean Assembly Albany

Dear Sir

Through the Press of this City I learn of the Amendment you have moved to the Bill respecting the appropriation of Moneys &c. Accept my thanks for your attentions to the interest of Vassar Female College; and believe me in promoting those interests you are advancing the true and the higher interest of the people.

We trust our College will be a powerful Engine in forming the coming generations of the Empire State; but that it may exert the highest amount of beneficent influence, it will need to receive something from the bounty of the State which has always been so liberally bestowed on other Colleges. Surely the daughters of the State are not less worthy of its beneficence than its Sons. If the men of future generations are to be worthy citizens, you must train the mothers who shall train those men.

As you have this matter in hand I trust you *will urge* it forward with your usual ability, energy & Success.

I am dear Sir

Yours very respectfully

*

May 9th 1863.

Rufus Babcock D D

My dear friend

This morning, after my return from the "Po' Rural Cementary" where by appointment I went to meet the Sexton or Keeper of the Grounds to remove the remains of my poor wife to her last resting place in the family Plot,—I received your very polite note of the 7th with inclosure. The latter I handed at once over to our President to reply as it is not my purpose nor wish to have any thing to do in matters of the College appointments for I am persuaded that I am neither competent nor am I *inclined* to assume responsibility were nothing can be gained for myself or the Institution. Already have there been conflicts in its workings thus far, and I am sure therefore there will be in the future. My business is to build, endow and outfit the College, and I shall have nothing to do with its internal organization. Your number *One* and *two* Statements by M^{rs} Babcock is entirely misapprehended. I merely remark^d this to her under the first head "That at the last June Meeting you suggested the propriety and did bring forward a "*Resolution*" to make a few Official appointments, but when it was remarked that such appointments in the absence of our President might not seem Courteous to him you at once concurred, withdrew the Suggestions and the mat-

ter was drop^d. I refer you to the Secretary Minutes for these facts. I have now in my possession the Copy of the letter I wrote after the June Meeting to Prof. Jewett and you may have an opportunity of seeing it at any time when you come to Po'. Your visit to Nantucket to see Miss Mitchell was at your own suggestion and approved by our Ex. Committee who authorized me to pay or the Treasurer to pay your Expenses so that *no blame* whatever rested on you or on me in that matter. The truth is as I believe that neither any thing you have *done* or left *undone* in connection with our College Matters have altered Prof. Jewetts feelings *towards you* as I *Know* of, but that *Somebody* has prejudiced his mind against you I believe.

You will excuse me if I rest my pen here as my head is beginning to get dizzy. At another day I hope to write or explain personally more fully.

Yours truly &c

*

May 12th 1863.

Rev^d Rufus Babcock DD

My dear Friend

Since my last of the 9th Current scarcely an hour has passed without my mind reverting to our College matters and bringing you in the Connection. In my last I briefly adverted to some incidents which may have changed Prof. Jewetts mind in relation to you, altho' they were far from being satisfactory even to myself yet whatever they may be, have had their influence, I am sorry, very sorry indeed that such should be the circumstances as to lead to such results, but I *Know* not what to do, and would only advise patience &

forbearance on your part perhaps something may "turn up" to remove them before the June Meeting, should this not be the case then I have in my mind another Scheme for your co-operation in promoting our Enterprize which I think will be honorable & gratifying to you and all concerned. At a proper time I will make it Known to you and I am persuaded it will meet your hearty response, and cannot in any way effect our President otherwise than for good. Do not let the developement of the past few days dishearten or discourage you,—time works wonderful changes in mens minds—perhaps the Causes which led to change Jewetts, may be removed whatsoever they may be.

truly your friend &c^a.

*May 30th 1863Rev^d Rufus Babcock DD

My dear friend

I am this morning in receipt of yours of yesterday and allow me to repeat that I deeply deplore and most sincerely regret the position of the private affairs between you and Prof. Jewett and would to God I could enterpose some paliatives, but I know not how or where to begin, if I did I *certainly would* for a *Knowledge of a disease is said to be half its Cure*. From my inmost heart I believe Prof. Jewetts prejudices against you are *candid* and *honest* and will never be changed unless the circumstances which induced them and led his mind to the present stand point are removed, whatever these may be he says he is willing and ready to disclose at the proper time. I would prefer to observe *entire silence* on what I suggested in my last letter until our

next private interview or a little while before the June Meeting or perhaps it may be most adviseable to wait untill after the Meeting at any rate it must be made at a *private interview*.

Having some pressing engagements on hand this morning I offer as an apology for this brief note in answer to yours before me.

I remain my very dear friend.

*

June 2^d 1863.

Rev^d Rufus Babcock

My dear friend. Yours of yesterday the 1st is before me, and which I have read with much interest as I do any thing from your pen. In answer to your first enquiry whether "I had seen his two letters to you and your answer to his first" I reply *substantially* I have altho' not perhaps the identical or original ones send you, they were both mailed I *believe* before he read the Copies (if Copies) to me. When Prof Jewett spoke to me of these letters (I believe it was the first) that I reluctantly wish to be a party to the controversy but if I was drawn into it should keep back nothing from you or him, would be frankly just between you both. He then remark^d that he took the responsibility entirely on himself and would by no means draw me into the contraversy. As matters now stand it is impossible for you to fill *any chair* in the College of which Prof Jewett is President. I speak this from a knowledge of facts, because I do believe that if I was to make it a point and insist on your chaplainship or any other office in the College, Prof Jewett would at once resign. I cannot go into an argument

or take part in one between you and him because I know it would be useless so far as to reconcile his feelings and it was for this reason that I stated in my last that I thought it best in you to remain entirely silent till a private interview with you either before or after the June Meeting, I do not know which his purposes are in regard to calling the Committee on Faculty & Studies together earlier than the June Meeting, but will enquire when I next see him. He has been absent a day or two and is now very busy in his own Study at home. I was glad to hear of Prof. Robinsons was reviving altho yet quite low.

Your affectionate friend

*

June 5th 1863.

Rev^d Charles A. Raymond

Sir I have held your last letter under consideration for several days, my feeble health forbidding me to enter into particulars respecting the contents, I must only say that having visited Dr Willard Parker of N. Y. last week, he was imperious in his advice "I must have rest," he also said the brain was taxed too much—I must think and talk less, I must give it up, therefore I shall follow his advice. The erecting of the College and endowing it is business enough for me. I have chosen a President in whom I have unshaken confidence, a board of Trustees equally as trustfully; with them the College will stand or fall. On the President I throw the great responsibility cheerfully. I am much obliged to you for the interest that you have expressed for the Institution and the proffered advice, but my health and the Doctors *Commands* will prevent

me from participating any more in the plan of organization on these grounds I must be excused as my health is greatly suffering by reason of over taxation of the brain.

I cannot however let this opportunity pass without acknowledging your Kindness and the valuable suggestions & services thus far rendered in College matters and for which I beg you to accept my warmest thanks with the enclosed note of yours payable to my order. say \$262 with Interest.

I have requested our Clerk M^r Schow to copy this note conforming to my Physicians instructions avoiding Brain labor.

Yours truly
J. N. Schow
for M^r Maath. Vassar.

*

Poughkeepsie, July 16, 1863.

Miss Emma C. Church

My dear Madame.

I were duly put in receipt of your kind favor of the 20th Ultimo with enclosures &c^a and would have acknowledged this sooner to release your anxiety, but were waiting the arrival of the pictures. They are now safely at hand and are temporarily placed in my domicil for security but not for exhibition as I am unwilling for the public to see them until our Art Gallery at the College is finished.

You are aware of the great disadvantages & injustice done to an Artist in not having their works properly exhibited, I therefore will not allow but few

persons to see them and those only of our Executive Board.

It is some times a virtue to acknowledge ones ignorance, this I now have an opportunity to do, I profess to be no critic in judgment of your art, but there are those in our Board who are, and I am happy to inform you that your pictures fully sustain their highest expectations. With regard the Bust to be executed by Miss Hosmer, I cannot at this moment speak, and some of our Committee being from town would not feel authorized to do more about it at present than to ascertain from Miss H the probable cost, which I will lay before them at early meeting after the receipt of her answer.

You having suggested whether if the other two pictures does not reach us before the fall 64 would be soon enough. I answer, yes, to reach us say by Sept^r 1, 64. Hereafter, you will send the other two without frames, as it is an expense to pack and transport so large packages, by giving us the size and style of the frame we can have them executed in N. Y. ready by the time they arrive.

I will not speak of our political troubles, you will find abundance to read and crimson your cheek as an american in the Journals from the 12th to 15th inst.

I would add further but President Jewett will write you in a day or two, on his return from New Haven.

I remain: D^r Miss Church

Yours very truly &C

*

Sept 2^d 1863.Rev^d Ch^r A. Raymond.

Dear Sir

Your letter of the 13th Ulto. I found on my desk on my return from Newport after an absence of some four weeks to the SeaBord for the benefit of my health, which must be my apology for not replying sooner. I have perused the same with as much attention as my feeble state of health will admit, and regret extremely that your feelings should be in the least degree cool towards me as you say in the first paragraph "that you was not surprised at the tone" of my letter after Jewetts treatment &c towards you. Allow me to say very honestly and promptly that I have not had nor would I take any part in the private questions or controversy between you and Prof. Jewett, I was and have as far as I know been entirely neutral, that the latter has done the fair thing with you I am not prepared to say "Yes or No" as I have not seen all your correspondence that you have strove to render the College enterprize a *Success* by adopting your plan of organization, I have always acknowledged and intended the return of your note &c^a as a compensation for that trouble, and for no other purpose and I thank^d you then and again at this time for it.

Miss Germond accompanied us to Newport, she unites in her best regards. The article in "Harper's Monthly I have not seen" I will get it, as she will be pleased to read any thing from your pen.

Very respectfully

P S. You will excuse this coming in our Clerks M^r

Schows handwriting as I was unable to do more than give a rough draft for him to copy

Sam^l Gregory MD Secretary N. E. Female Med.
College Boston

*

Novbr 6 1863.

My dear Sir. Permit me to thank you for your fifteenth Annual Catalogue & report to the New England Female Medical College and while penning this last sentence I am reminded of the Criticism now going on among several of our Litterati regarding the Etymology of the Vassar Female College, several of them advising a change to "Vassar Girls College" or College for young Ladies as the term "*female*" more directly apply to the brute creation &c^a. I cannot however at this moment enter into the merits of the controversy, suffice to say as we have adopted the customary name to designitate the character of our Institution. I hardly think it of sufficient importance to change its title at this late day, notwithstanding the criticism of M^{rs} Hale Editrice of the Godey Book & others. You will see in the forthcoming numbers from 1 January ensuing the subject fully discussed &c.

I have read your last annual catalogue with much interest. I most sincerely hope you may be able to make a beginning for your buildings for the College, purchase of lots &c; do let me Know how you Succeed, I have so much interest in your Success of your noble enterprize, that altho' not very flush with means will do something for it

Respectfully

*

December 15th 1863.

My dear Miss Church care of Freeborn & Co. Bankers.
Rome.

Delays are not always disappointments, they often inure to our benefits, whether the delay of my answer to your kind favor of the 27 Octbr will prove true in this case, time will determine. Soon after the receipt of your last I took the earliest opportunity to lay it before our Ex. Committee, but without their taking any action thereon—the fact is, this matter of buying pictures has given me some trouble. I will briefly state them. When Prof. Jewett was in England & Rome in the Summer of 62 he wrote to me *not* as Chairman of the Ex. Com of V. F. C., but *personally* avoiding all acts that more properly belong^d to the Committee on “Fine Arts” which is composed of Prof. S. F. B. Morse, Benson J. Lossing (Historian) E. L. Magoon DD. Honb^l Jno Thompson and Jno Guy Vassar, and in as much as the Chairman of that Committee had not been advised or consulted, a little feeling of jealousy was created, so much so as one or two of them have since declined to co-operate and they have not seen your first pencillings & a fine engraving now in my possession bought by M^r Jewett. Seeing this matter *hangs fire* and unwilling to widen the breach I informed the Board of Trustees yesterday that to remove all trouble, I would take the picture now in process of execution (Foligno) off your hands and present it to the College *gratis* sooner than to have any further trouble or feeling upon it. The whole matter now stands between us, you and me, and therefore I wish (especially as you have an opportunity to dispose of it

to other parties) to inform me at *once* the lowest price for it, framed in a neat plain manner, box^d, packed and delivered on board of any Packet bound to N. Y City at your convenience after its completion and render me bills of lading that I may insure &c. This course I have adopted, first to save all further murmurings and secondly to give an opportunity to indorse my prudence in selecting an artist who I believe will do the highest Credit to the profession of our Country^s women abroad. Therefore should you be successfull in the celebrated work of the worlds great master " Raphael " Foligno it will releave me from no little unpleasant feelings but immortalize your name in the estimates of every lover of the art who may visit V. F. College for years to come. You will now understand that the immortal " Foligno " is executed on my account consulting your own convenience as to time for its execution, applying the College funds now in your hands on its account and the balance will be promptly paid on its delivery aforesaid &c at Leghorn or any other port of embarkation you may select

Yours respectfully

P S. The fourth picture you propose to paint for the College must of course depend upon circumstances, that is, how acceptable the 3^d proves.

*

22 Decbr 1863

Rev^d E. L. Magoon DD.

My dear friend Our Secretary M^r Swan has this moment show^d me your letter of yesterday to the Trustees of V. F. College purporting to resign your posi-

tion in their Board, with accompanied reasons therefore, all of which have weighed deeply on my mind, and I could not rest untill you had been seen on the subject & that before laying it before our Ex. Committee in the hopes that you will reconsider this matter and consent to retain your place in the Board. I would come up myself but my health do not permit & therefore M^r Swan goes up to tomorrow morning to see you. If there is any thing outside of the doings of the Ex. Committee that has induced to this proceeding on our part, do my dear friend inform me, if not, and *only* as you *remark* to enable you to lay aside all wordly engrossment, that you may devote your life more to the cause of truth & righteousness, then I would beg to remark, what medium is there on earth more directly effectual than the early training of children thro' the moral and religious influences that will be inculcated in the College as I stated in my address at the meeting of the Trustees 1861, besides, your resignation will be taken advantage of by numerous femal Educational Rivals and turn^d to our special disadvantage both here and in other places. I pray therefore my dear friend do re-consider this matter and remain in our Board, I cannot consent to part with you.

Do write me, but don't resign

Yours very truly

*

December 24, 1863.

My dear Miss Church

Since I last wrote our John G. Vassar one of the Committee on "Fine Arts" will sail on Saturday or

Monday for Europe and I have requested him to take Rome on his Route and call upon you, not that I have any special message to send by him but to make your nearer and special acquaintance, and thus be as the modern "spiritualist" say in direct "Communication" with our *invisible* friend. You can not imagine how anxious I am that the picture (the Foligno) now in process of execution should prove a great success. There is so many speculations and wide spread interest in our Country respecting the great productions of the several schools and artists, that I feel an intense desire that your pencilings should prove a model. There has been a little disorder in our Committee on "Fine Arts" originating from trifling circumstances, but widening into a breach, followed by the resignation of the Chairman of that Committee Doctor Magoon, but I hope he will yet retain his seat.

The attention of this Committee has been recently called to examine a Collection of choice Engravings with some interesting drawings in Water Colors &c, the property of the late E. P. Clark of Boston, valued at some \$9,000, perhaps the largest in America, but before our Committee on Fine Arts could get together, (some being absent from home) the whole catalogue was sold at about that sum to a gentleman of great wealth in Boston.

A Gentleman here has called our attention to a Collection of original drawings & Engravings belonging to the Estate of the Duke of Carsano at Naples valued at some 12,000 ducats containing 1268 drawings original by the old masters and 26000 Engravings of all times, illustrating the history & progress of that art, being the best engravings by the first masters of that

art, all of which can be had for perhaps 8 to 10,000 ducats, but this collection is much greater than the College need & unless it could be purchased & divided with some other parties, we shall give no attention to it. I regret that some of our Committee on Fine Art are absent from the City for I wanted to say something in this letter about your two pictures received. We are now about in the midst of Holloday seasons, which reminds me to join in the usual compliments with a long & useful life.

I remain dear Miss Church. Yours very truly

*

December 30" 1863.

Rev^d E. L. Magoon DD

Albany

My very dear friend. If you only Knew how anxious I am to learn your final decission in the matter of retaining your position in the board of Trustees in the V. F. C. I know you would not consider this letter an intrusion on your valuable time. The more I have reflected upon your proposed resignation, the more I am convinced it will operate to the serious disadvantage of our enterprize. We have among us many good *sort* of people that are often shrugging up their Shoulders accompanied with significant gestures as to the final success of the College enterprize and whom in the event of a *failure* would *not* sob aloud with *regrets* or *griefs*.

Oh for *humanity poor humanity*, but it is just here as elsewhere, we are not *worse* (tho' I say it with some reluctance) than those on whom the Tower of Sileam fell. Do my dear friend think *twice* before you act

once and if be possibly consistent with your other relations of duty retain your position in the Board &c.

Wishing you & yours the best compliments of the season

I remain—dear Sir

Yours truly

LETTERS OF 1864

THE YEAR OF CRISIS

Among the persons addressed in the letters of this year are two of special interest: Henry Barnard, the editor of the "American Journal of Education" from 1855 to 1881, a great educational reformer, and Henry Ward Beecher, the pastor of Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, and anti-slavery leader.

The letters show important plans for the college developing: the purchase of an art gallery; the establishment of a music department; the possible appointment of a permanent chaplain. The undercurrent of the letters is the increasing difference of opinion between the Founder and President Jewett: on the date of the opening of the college; on the omission of the word "female" in the name "Vassar Female College"; on the extent to which women should be engaged as professors in the faculty; on the adoption of the "University Plan" of organization.

These differences culminated in the crisis caused by the intercepted letter in which President Jewett criticized the Founder,—(a letter no copy of which has yet been found). The final result of the friction was the resignation of President Jewett and the appointment of John Howard Raymond as his successor.

*

Tuesday Morning January 5th 1864.Rev^d E. L. Magoon DD

My very Kind friend

In answer to your valued letter of 12 pages written on New Years morning, I am sincerely & heartily glad to notice that the day dawned upon you so cheerfully and auspiciously "that all the world was left behind" and passing an interval at the Throne of Grace, you so kindly turned your thought to me by acknowledging my letter &c^a however much I felt my need of your friendly advise, I could hardly amidst all your Pastoral and social duties at this festival season expect a reply. You have however *avored me*, and of such a length and character that commends both your patience, generosity and goodness. Its fullness and depth of illucidations in the matter of our gallery of fine Arts, abounds with important suggestions and instructions in the making up of that department, and it was for *this very* reason that I felt and expressed that there was wanting in our Board the *right* man for that place, and for that reason urged you to retain your position, your artistic taste and capacity for illustrating, and developing those sciences by appropriate embellishments in the Gallery of Arts in V. F. College, and it was specially the wish of the Founder that its walls and portfolios should be adorned with the most significant expressive & instructive *educating forces* of those materials, as I have allways believed that if man delight in the natural material works of his maker they will greatly aid his moral and spiritual culture, and thus "Look" up from nature to nature's God, and for that reason (as you justly observe) "We want

a Gallery of diversified actualities in artistic Elegance &c to illustrate the loftiest principle and refine the heart."

Now my dear friend tell me how to do this thing best? I am no connoisseur myself, nor do I Know of any one in our honb^l board besides yourself that can, but how can I expect you to leave your sacred and gracious calling "to serve tables" but some one must, our President cherfully would, but like myself has not the Capacity or he would not have ordered from an *undistinguished* american artist four pencillings of so *large a size* at so great cost to *adorn* the walls of V. F. C. had *their* cost been laid out in several *original copies* (as you suggest) by different celebrated artists on different subjects it would perhaps not been amiss—however let this now pass—I have assumed the two other pictures now in process of execution so the Trustees shall not complain.

We think of holding the February meeting, alltho' there is no special business save the examination of the revised plan or document of Organization & which could be without material disadvantage deferred to our *June Meeting*. I wish my health would allow me to come up to Albany to see you which I want to very much but I am troubled with such constant vertigo or dizziness I cannot, I am now writing these lines aside of my couch in my own domicil as I cannot go to the Office, nor have I been for several days, you will please therefore to excuse this hasten written sheet, also ink it having been frozen

Will you not allow your letter thrown into a different form as you may prefer to be read as your report at our next meeting of Trustees. If you will, it will

gratify me, and may if you wish be regarded as at my suggestion. If it is possible for me to come up the last of this or the early part of next week I will, therefore please to inform me what days you are mostly at leisure. With my warmest regards to you & yours,

I remain Truly yours &c

*

Jan^{ry} 15th 1864.

E. L. Magoon DD

My dear friend. Since our short and pleasant interview at your domicile on Wednesday I have been exercising my thoughts on the suggestions you then made as to the manner of making up our Gallery of Art, convinced as I am, if properly and artistically arranged will do more or at least as much as any other appropriation to the College in securing a favorable public estimation of the Institution and therefore as you justly remarked its special purpose should be to elevate and imbue the minds of the pupils with the most refined and perfect specimens illustrating that science, I do not now speak of its advantages in its moral bearings; which by so doing would extend these remarks beyond my present purpose—suffice to say I want our College to *possess your Collections*, but as that is a matter that more especially belong to the Committee in that department I shall wave further considerations upon it till their next meeting. I was out to the College Buildings yesterday. The principal room is the Library apartment,—is there any method of hanging pictures around its walls than the manner you have adopted, viz. to avoid the least mutilation

of the walls. After our separation yesterday, I could not help thinking what a narrow escape you had from fire within the short space of another hour all would have been ended in a mass of ruins—how great issues hangs in a thread of time, Such are the chances of life, we only exist by moments, the next perhaps we are in eternity. Why cannot man fully apprehend the thought, “to be or not to be *thats* the Question.” Our President left home yesterday noon for N. York to meet by appointment some gentlemen whom are applicants in the professional department of music—Jewett regards this department as very important branch of instruction, both for the reputation and pecuniary advantages of the College. We have some 30 defened Pianoforte rooms for *Practise*, converging halls or passage ways to the platform of the great audience room which will seat some 1000 or more persons.

There was one topic which I had not time to consult you upon viz. The policy of a permanent stated Chaplainship or the duties of that office to be self imposed by the different religious instructors in the Institution. There has been much discussion on this point and there is a diversity of opinions—while on the one hand we wish to avoid the imputation of sectarians, on the other we must take care not to incline too far from true Catholic evangelical sentiments and practise. It is therefore by this middle course we hope to demonstrate to the public that V. F. C. is the peoples College, and whatever difference there may be in creeds there is not any in the great fundamental truth of the precious bible, *without note or comment*.

What think you of this view—am *I right* if I have

my own special religious views of *doctrines*—should I insist upon their adoption by others who may differ with me—but I leave the further discussion of this till we next meet,—I reported our visit to your house to Prof. Jewett and my Nephew M. V. Jr who will call and see you and your collections soon.

I remain

Yours truly

*

Copy of a letter to a intimate friend¹
written in July 1862.

My dear friend Your esteemed favors of the 29th and 31st Ult^o, the latter confidential were duly received, and it gives me much pleasure not only to read them but to answer them, I must however do so as briefly as possible as I wish you to be possessed of my views in the important suggestions made to me in the latter as soon as possible in order to relieve your mind. Allow me then to remark that it is the *first* intimation that I have had of the intention of the Board of Trustees making any appointments of Officers in the V. F. C. at their meeting and if any such purposes are contemplated I shall oppose it on the ground of premature policy, and more especially in the absence of our President, I think you may dismiss your fears at once in that matter, besides when the proper time come to fill the respective official departments there will likely be a Council appointed to confer with the President whose duty it will be to recommend or nominate to the Board suitable persons for the respective departments, I have long since formed my opinion as to the Kind and qualifications

¹ This letter is out of chronological order in the copy-book as it is here.

of persons adapted to fill these stations—I profess to know something of men and things, their fitness for posts and places, and while the hoary head is often the seat of wisdom, it is not allways the vehicle for great mental action, it cannot give that *inspiration* to the youthfull mind as those in nearer affinity of years. It takes “Young America” to advance to be the pioner of progression, the fathers to hold on to the old homestead, and this rule applies to every principle of human pursuits & actions. There must not be, and there will not be with my consent a nursery opened in V. F. C. for mere *sinecures*; influences are constantly working to this end in the Church, State and public institutions of our Country. Nothing is so destructive to my Bee-Apiary at Springside as the confounded old Drones bees, they neither gather honey themselves, nor let those that would be *busy, work*. I make no special application of this idea to any person but only as a general principle. I set out with no favoritism *as such* in the beginning of our enterprize and intend if God spare my life to carry it out. I wish our Institution to be free from such biases as we purpose to have it free from sectarian or familiy biases, whatever is for the *best good* of our Institution be the *Motto* for all time.

I have now covered one side of my sheet and must look it over to see what I have written for my thoughts go as swift as a mill race, and leaves about as much impression on the memory as the flowing waters on the sides of the conduct. The first thing that now arrest my attention in your *note* to be *noted* is the compliments passed respecting my mental vigor &c^a; did I not believe you to me my true friend I would take it

to be simple bombast. I shall try to heed your admonition "not to weary myself too much about the College" altho' you have set me a severe task, it is so stereotyped upon my brain, I can think of nothing else. Day before yesterday I took my daily round (with our old friend and townsman late from now 19 years absent) &c.&c.

*

January 19" 1864.

Professor M B. Anderson LLD

My dear friend

It is told of one just from the Emeralds Isl^d that some dock sharper sold him an *Owl* for a parrot; in passing to his Boarding house a gentleman enquired of Pat what he had there, a Parrot your honor, well can he talk much, not yet your honor, but he will shortly be after it, for he keeps up a good *deal of thinking*. Now I am much in the same predicament as the Irishmans parrot with large glossy eyes waiting for *twilight* to set in so that I *can see* for I have been so long surrounded with the brillancy of professional acumen, that I have almost lost all my common sense. Now that our College Edifice is drawing near to completion, and Out Buildings & Ornamental grounds finished up or at least will be by the ensuing fall, the subject of furnishing & opening the College begins to engross our attention. We possibly *could* by strong pressure of our mental & physical muscles get prepared to fix the day on the 1st September next, but this must be accomplished by stirring & active efforts and at the Sacrifice of 30 to 40 perCent advance for war prices on all its interior equipments, beds & bedding, furni-

ture, Kitchen & culinary appendages. The question therefore to determine is shall we go on regardless of difference in values between peace & war times or wait quietly a year or two for the suppression of the rebellion & return of Specie Currency. *True* our assets (some of them are inflated by this paper Currency, & will go down on the return of peace but not equal to the amount of other Kind values. Our College assets will now average an interest of 7prC. Pr Annum. Would it be wise therefore to take the last eggs out of their nest & put them into brick, Stone & Mortar. Prof Jewett is rather a "Young America" he is for going ahead, our Executive Committee are for going slow, sure & strong, not for one day only, but for generations after us, that is, lay our foundation so deep that it will endure for ages, not kill the Goose for sake of her golden egg. I suppose you have been informed by Prof Jewett of our contemplated meeting next month with its business objects, the chief of which will be the adoption of his plan of "Organization" and perhaps there may be some attempts at *official* appointments. Well, are you prepared to meet this question. I shall oppose all appointments that involve Out-goes too early, and I am not so sure but some other system can be adopted whereby fixed *emoluments* to Professors & others may be substituted for working sliding scale, it is much more easy to follow in the wake of old customs, than to strike out new ones. The present age has unfolded if *not new things*, a new way of doing *Old* ones. Once the old Stage coach had its rule of Fares regulated according to the distance travelled, now the modern "Omnibusses" regards not space but fix the fares long or short at one

price. The modern Hotels charges for what you order not for what *you eat* and House is furnished by the owner with all its equipments to the Landlord, and he sails the Ship, how would such plan work for our College, The Trustees furnish & rent the Buildings & appurtenances to one, two or more Professors or Educators at a certain perCentage on each pupil, over a minimum number. I have not fixed the rule but it should necessarily be on a sliding scale, On this principle also the Educational department may be based, similar to the present, University plan, impart to the pupils what learning they are able to pay for & give them diplomas for what they have learnt. The truth is the age is rapidly throwing aside old forms & customs and adopting systems more in harmony with the genius of the american people, but I have wrote enough to tire you I fear, allow me just to say that I have read your articles in the Examiner on the condition of english Society &c^a with much interest and shall preserve them to read over again at another day.

Hoping to see you at or before the February meeting I remain
Yours &c

P. S. I have thrown out the above hints on the College Organization, Professors &c^a at random because I Know you to be well posted on these subjects and may have learnt something during your late tour in Europe.

When you come to the february meeting, please to make my domicil your quarters for the time being.

If you take the H. River Carrs on Monday I will meet you at the depot at any hour you name to arrive.

I expect or at least shall invite D^r. Magoon to be our guest on that occasion.
Yours &c^a

*

Poughkeepsie January 25" 1864.

My dear M^{rs} Hale

I am in receipt of your Kind & valued note p" President Jewett of the 19" Current and have read over and given your suggestions the most profound consideration. At the incipient stage of the contemplated scheme (Vassar F. College) before lipping the *idea* to any mortal, I first conferred with my friend Prof. Jewett whom had been extensively engaged at the South in the Education of Ladies, and from whom I not only received a full indorsement of my views, but he largely contributed to aid me in its further development & thus resulted in my poor endeavours to do what I intimated at my brief opening address at the February meeting 61.

I only add that our Executive Committee has authorized the publication of the article in the January Number of your Ladys Book that is, our secular paper has solicited the permission thus signifying the interest they take in the view of the article, by republishing it at their own Cost. The subject of Women Professors & Teachers is now fairly before our Trustees, who at their Meeting 23^d proximo will report their views, and decide if it can be safely adopted in our College at the opening. The only question that can possibly arise, is whether we *can obtain* prominent destinguished Ladies instructors to fill the several chairs. Miss Maria Mitchell of Nantucket had been named by a gentleman of our Board of Trustees as Professor of Astronomy, but the planing & erection of the Observatory having been under the Superintendence of Professor Farrar late of Elmira Female College

N. Y., it is thought that the chair *may be offered* to him.

Yours very truly & respectfully

*

January 28th 1864.

Prof. M. B Anderson LL.D.

My dear friend. I am in receipt of your very Kind and valued letter of the 25th inst. and I scarcely Know which most to approve, your sensible views upon the propriety of opening the College when the buildings is finished, or wait untill our terrible rebellion is substantially put down. What we would gain on the one hand as you justly observe, we might loose on the other, but I shall use my endeavours to push forwards the structure of the College Building & appendages as fast as possible avoiding *extraordinary outlays*. It is one thing to do these things well looking to the future durability and another thing doing them *imperfectly*. It is a massive structure of masonry, all inside partitions walls solid brick work, and will take at least one Summer to thoroughly season the whole. Thus far have allowed no fires inside the building, the walls are drying gradually, but still their is a cold dampness which it will take all of a Summer to remove. If in case we should open the College before it was thoroughly dry and extraordinary cases of Sickness happen to the inmates, it would be at once ascribed to the location, especially by those who generally wish to look on the wrong side of competitors doings. It is true we could hasten the drying of the interior walls by our Steam heating apparatus which we have decided upon with the gass works to be placed in a seperate build-

ing 200 feet from the main and 75 below the foundation of the walls. These buildings will be located on the rear in line with the Astronomical Observatory now under construction

I am glad to hear that your judgment indorses the wisdom of my course in the matter of completing the Structure &c at once, when that is done, we shall not be troubled with workmen & others on the premises & thus avoid I think both expense and annoyances. Our Executive Committe are now making out a Schedule of Furnitures that is wanted with other equipments &c including the Professors houses which by the bye the latter admits *consideration* whether the College had better furnish those apartments or the Professors, some of them (if we have men) may have furnitures & family^s, and if Widows Ladies Teachers some may be thus situated also they may not all be single Women. This is a question (-furniture) of some importance.

1st The owner would allways take better care of their own property than other peoples

2^d There might be some objection to the lugging of Furniture to and from into the building in case of removal to say nothing of its fitness, cleanlines &c &c

3^d It (-if furnished by the College) would somewhat reduce the annual pay of the respective chairs. You know our first plan was to build seperate houses for the Professors on the College grounds, leaving the only officer President & family in the building—but I will not enlarge as I hope to have the pleasure of meeting you so very soon and at my own domicil. I only add that in a conversation with Prof. Jewett the other day I believe he is half persuaded to have all female Professorships & teacher if they are to be had of a high

order. Let us all *deliberate* well upon this point, I regard it as a very important consideration I send you Pr. Mail a Sheet containing an article from the Ladies Book January number, read it & let me Know what you think of it

Yours truly

P S. Call on your way on Monday 22^d February upon Dr Magoon and take a look at his Collections of fine Arts, then you & him take the Cars at 3 P M. and on your arrival at 6 o'clock take a Hack at Depot and come up directly to my house.

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February 2^d 1864.

Honb^l Henry Barnarde

Dear Sir

It is a long time since I had the pleasure of exchange of letters with you but I have not the less often had you in my thoughts, and now as our College Edifice is drawing near to completion we are busying ourselves upon the plan of its organization, official appointees &c^a &c^a. It is not allways the best results are obtained from past theory's and practise, yet if one takes a step forward they are usually denounced as visionary, humbugs &c^a.

Some 30 years ago (I will not now state the causes) I was led to idea that as woman had received from her Creator the same intellectual constitution as man she had the same right to all its advantages. Now with a single purpose more fully to illustrate *that idea* we want to begin our College with *Female* Professors & teachers if they can be had in America fitly qualified, except in a few departments, and it would give me

great pleasure to Know your opinion on this subject before the meeting of the Board of Trustees on the 23^d inst. If it is not taxing your valuable time too much I should be very glad to hear from you.

I remain Dear Sir

M. V.

P S. There is a diversity of opinion in our Board of Trustees on this question and is causing no little discussion. With your permission would lay your reply to this letter before them.

M V.

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February 6th 1864.

Rev^d Ch^r A. Raymond

My dear Sir I am very busy just now in writing out what I want to say to our Board of Trustees of the annual meeting of the 23^d proximo and in so doing I shall try to embody such thoughts and ideas as will best convey my *original idea* on the education of woman, and for which I especially gave the endowment of \$408,000 for the building of the College, ignoring as much of the old Systems of instruction as I deemed *wrong* and intriducing such *new ones* as I believed to be *right* and that plan is substantially akin to the one which we often talk^d over and which you wrote me so copiously about while Professor Jewett was in Europe in 1862, and which I stated more or less in my correspondence with him in his absence abroad. Some time after Prof. Jewett returned home he requested the use of these (his letter to me) letters a little while to refresh his memory & I loaned them to him which together with mine to him he says he burnt up, therefore I have not a scrap of any corre-

spondence with Prof. J. during his professional tour to Europe in 1862. I have since much regretted this circumstance as I want them occasionally for references.

With regard to Teachers, Instructors &c^a and the System of Education I am of the same mind as I were some 20 years ago viz Woman to educate her sex. First the Mother, then a Female Teacher, and then the System allways to be the most Simple, comprehensive and least expensive. I then Knew nothing or next to nothing about Colleges or University^s, as I had never studied them, nor had I ever went to either for instruction—all I wanted was the *best* that is the most direct and effectual way to elevate woman in the highest sphere of such Knowledge as God and nature has *designed her*, and after receiving your Several letters in 62 on this subject they enlightened my mind still further and it was by these combinations of ideas that finally resulted in the adoption of them. Prof Jewett however differed from me and has to this day altho' I really think his mind has underwent a change. The subject of Organization is now fairly up & will be laid before the Trustees 23^d Inst. and will write you the result
Yours truly

*

Poughkeepsie February 6th 1864.

Professor M. B. Anderson LLD

Dear Sir. Allow me to occupy a moment of your time, merely to say that I am preparing my address to be read at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees, which address will fully define my views in regard to the Education of Woman, embracing in its policy

Woman as Educator of Woman, I may have some difficulty at first in finding competent Educators "Then as to the System to be adopted in the Organization" whether we shall strictly adhere to the University plan or modify it in some way to suit our speciality. Jewett goes the old College System with some slight modifications but I believe will yield something further for the sake of harmony. If you come to my house the evening before the Meeting I will read over to you my address embracing my views etc.

Yours truly,

*

February 26th 1864

Miss Sarah J. Hale

Dear Madame

Your favor of the 19th Current came duly to hand, but at a moment when I was intensely engaged in preparing for a special adjourned meeting of the Board of Trustees to review the plan of Organization &c^a of the College previously submitted to them, one of which I believe I sent you. This meeting was fully attended, much discussion on various topics transpired, and especially as regards the System of instruction & the professional appointees of the College—thus far my views in long unison with yours in favor of Ladies teachers has gained ground, and I am encouraged to believe, that if competent females can be obtained, every one of them will be filled by that sex, and if not at the opening will soon thereafter. As soon as they can be printed will send you my address to the Board and that of Doctor Magoon, Chairman on the Committee of Art on the influence of fine Arts upon Society. Our Board

is composed of men of various talents most happily divided to promote the material & literary advancement of the Institution. Such a combination of talent is rarely to be found in any Board.

Your wishes in the matter of change in the College name was fully discussed. B. I. Lossing and several others strenuously advocating its adoption, and others opposing—the most efficient of these latter were D^r Bishop of N. Y. D^r Anderson of Rochester & D^r Raymond of Brooklyn. The final question of its adoption however was deferred until the regular annual meeting in June. It was *resolved* that the utmost exertion be made to open the College in Sept^r next, therefore if you should in the intermediate time hear of any distinguished Ladies highly qualified to fill either of the Chairs, please to inform me.

The Success of all true progress is earnestness, ability & perserverance with moderation. Men long wedded to old customs will reluctantly consent to change their opinions, altho' fully convinced of their wrong, I therefore have advised to begin our College with only a portion of the chairs occupied by Ladies teachers, ultimately we can make them for ourselves. I do not think our President *heartily* in favor of *your idea* of either altering the name of the College or adopting the policy of Ladies Professorship in general. I believe I informed you of having caused to be printed a number of Copies of your sons article on that subject. The idea is now fully before the public. We hope to develop it more largely.

With much respect

Yours &c

*

March 11th 1864.

Mrs. Sarah J. Hale.

Dear Madame

I send you by this day's mail an abstract of my address delivered at an adjourned meeting of the Board of Trustees of V. F. College on the 23^d Ultimo. As you have heretofore expressed your Kind sentiment to me & my Enterprize and also thro' the public Journal favoring the advancement of womans social natural rights in the departments of Knowledge, and of her fitness and adaptation to promote the culture of her own sex, I take the liberty of sending you the above and if you think it worthy to give it a place in your valuable Journal (Ladys Book) so that it may be more extensively read by the Ladies of our Country, than if published in other secular Journals.

Hoping this will find you in health &c I remain

Yours truly

*

March 23^d 1864M^{rs} Sarah J. Hale.My dear M^{rs} Hale.

Yours of the 19th Current have just reached me, and as heretofore I do always value every article from your pen, not perhaps because they abound with vigorous Sentiments or finished Sentences but because of their *truthfulness*, besides I feel happy to have one by my side whose *idea* is, that Womans mental powers in this world are *unappreciated* or, if appreciated, Custom has prevented her from employing them. It is this *idea*

that has given rise to much discussion between President Jewett and myself, he was willing to grant to me all my claim in this particular if I left him a majority of male Professors in the College, while I desired and have since demanded that every chair possible shall be filled by Women, and now I might as well say in this connection that by pressing this *idea* upon him that "Vassar College" shall be a College for Women, and not men in all its departments with some other matters (which I will not trouble you with) may possibly lead to the Selection of some other person to fill that chair, however as you regard me the true friend of Women and I am desirous to avoid any Convulsion in our Board, further action will be delay^d untill the meeting of the 28th June. My desire is now and always has been to make our College, not only a College to educate Women, but a College of instruction by *women*. Will you my dear M^{rs} Hale continue to support me in these views. I have already written Miss Maria Mitchell (thro' a friend) and hope we may agree upon her as Professor of Astronomy. A letter from her this day encourages me to hope Success. I shall take an early opportunity to see M^{rs}. L. A. Cuddeby or write to her and inform her of your friendship and of my desire to avail myself of any Suggestion she may make. D^r Jewett to whom you wrote on the Subject has not mentioned her name to me. With regard to the Chaplancy & Chair of moral philosophy &c^a D^r J. wanted these filled with Baptist, but while I was a Baptist by birth, my father & mother Baptists by profession, have attended Baptist Church for over 60 years, was a Baptist in principle, built a Baptist Edifice in 1840 in this city at my own cost of \$25000

and gave to the Society and from that time down to this very hour contributed annually 3 to 550\$ pr year for the Support of a Baptist ministry &c^a, yet I hold all *Christians alike* and thus wish to carry out the principle that all who truly love our Lord Jesus Christ and do his Will are *brethern*, outward forms of Religion are but aids, vitality or eternal life begins & end *within* the *heart* and not the *head* we must be born again. So much for my *Sectarianism*.

I remain dear M^{rs} Hale

Yours &c^a

*

April 20 1864

My dear M^{rs} Hale

Yours of the 31st Ult^o. is received and my apology for omitting to remark in my former letters on the Subject of the Faculty being *all* Ladies, was for the very reason that I was apprehensive that the Trustees would not *all* of them yield to the suggestion, nor were I sure that it would be fully sustained if they did by *public opinion*, but throwing out my *idea* in advance and working up to it *prospectively* would cause less friction or opposition. So also with regard to the change of name or title of the College, which would require Legislature authority or permission which I approve, so that when the time comes for me to donate a further sum to the Institution I shall make this point (with some other matters) a condition of the Gift, which will exert an influence in the change, and thus meet out your views & mine. Whatever remarks therefore you may think proper to make in this mat-

ter in your next number of the Ladys book I hope you will do so in accordance with these views but upon your *own* authority, as I do not wish in this stage of the Enterprize to be fully committed for policys Sake. I wrote Mrs. Cuddehy & received an answer and at her solicitation of being further informed on the plan of Organization &c^a wrote her again today.

I will Send your Son H. Hale Esq my address this
afternoon. Yours truly

*

April 27th 1864.

Rev^d Henry Ward Beecher

Altho' I have not the pleasure of your personal acquaintance, I venture to address you without further apology. A vacancy has recently occurred in our Board of Trustees in the Vassar Female College by the resignation of President Jewett; for particulars I beg leave to refer to our mutual friend Prof Jno H. Raymond LL.D, and it being desirable to fill the vacancy speedily to avoid conflicting opinions by delay, I am prompted after consultation with several members of the Board to solicit you to accept the nomination as Trustee, and if I receive your favorable answer by the 29th Inst. by M^r Raymond (at which time a meeting will be held to fill the Chair of Presidency) I will propose your name. I need not assure you that your acceptance would be highly gratifying to the entire Board & the whole community.

Yours very truly & respectfully,

*

April 27th 1864.

Prof. Jno. H. Raymond LL.D.

Dear Sir

At my request M^r Swan saw you recently in reference to M^r Beecher being placed on the Board of Trustees. It seems that in the meeting in New York yesterday he was Compelled in regard to truth & fairness to state what my wishes were & that some of the gentlemen there present had doubts as to the propriety or desirableness of that appointment. After hearing what took place at that interview I am still bound to say that it is my strong impression the appointment just now would have a good effect and it is my desire as well as my deliberate judgment that it should be made if M^r Beecher can be induced to accept it, as I sincerely trust he may. I have therefore written to him an open letter to this effect which I enclose that you may read & forward it to M^r Beecher.

I am happy in being able to look forward to the certainty of your appointment as President and with such a flattering unanimity. I wish you moreover to know that I shall look upon your acceptance as a personal favor to me & that I shall feel every assurance that under your guidance this Institution to which everything I hold dear stands already pledged, will become assured of a most honored success.

Yours truly & respectfully.

*

April 28th 1864.

Mrs. Sarah J. Hale.

Dear Madame! Your letter of the 25th Current with enclosures of your son & family photographs introduces me agreeably to your very heart and gratifies me. I receive them as evidences of your good will to me personally & of your approval of my intentions at least, I shall be glad to know a gentleman who has already ranked himself among the savants of our land. The Extracts from the Ladys Book for June which you send place myself not less than our College under obligations to you for your earnest efforts in our behalf. I value greatly these evidences of your intelligent interest for all that concerns the elevation of woman.

In my last I had intended to say to you that if the plates I sent you are worthy of that distinction & you will be at the trouble of causing them to be neatly framed & will send the bills to me I will see that they are met.

The Extracts from your Sons letter help sustain me in the views I have already advanced & in the action about to be taken in reference to Dr Jewett. I greatly regret he should have taken any action in reference to your friend Mrs Cuddehy that does not commend itself to yourself or to her. I was not aware what steps if any had been taken by him upon that Subject. Your letter to me have left no doubt on my mind that this lady is quite equal to any position she might be willing to assume. But upon this general subject I have expressed deliberately to the College Trustees my personal wishes and the responsibility is thrown

upon them to carry them forward now or at such other time as they may judge best, I am not aware except in a general way to what extent my desires are to be met at the opening of the College. The Committee on that Subject (Faculty) I understand do intend to make a fair division of appointments between the Sexes. I mean of course of the higher grades, as the lesser positions, I take it for granted, will all be for ladies. In regard to particular appointments my general health & my other duties prevent my giving them the requisite attention to ensure the Success of any applicants upon my own recommendation alone. The most I have hoped to do has been to lay down my own general views & wishes, leaving the question as to whether they are to be immediately carried out and the manner in which they are to be carried out to my coadjutors and to the gentlemen of that Committee.

The possible change of Presidency may to some extent affect the question of Professors but to what degree I of course am quite unable to Know in advance, outside influences will of necessity have more or less effect and among these none are more likely to be listened to than the valuable publications with which you are associated. I hail discussion as sure to accomplish or aid in accomplishing the best result, be it what it may.

Truly yours &c

*

May 2^d 1864.

Henry Ward Beecher

Dear Sir

I feel gratified & complimented by your acceding to my desire to place your name on our list and to enlist your judgment & Services in behalf of our College as Trustee. I only regret the delay as M^r Raymonds despatch did not reach me until after the adjournment of the Board or the subject would have received our attention at once. Our next meeting is in June next, when it will afford me a high degree of pleasure to name you in connection with the present vacancy.

Yours respectfully

*

May 19["] 1864.My dear M^{rs} Hale

Your kind letter of the 14th Current is before me, with enclosures, I thank you for them I was glad President Jewett advised you of his resignation, as it saved me from that painful duty, I might have been led by the way of justification to myself and the College too deeply into the subject, I prefer to leave the past only to forgive altho' I *cannot forget* "an intercepted" letter under his signature disclosed his future views & purposes towards me and my immediate Associates, however all has resulted in unanimous harmony in the change of Presidency & things & matters are now going on smoothly I could not reach the point I desired with Jewett at the head. Doct. Raymond has been appointed his successor & we hope he will accept. H W. Beecher his friend & adviser has also Kindly offered to serve as Trustee. I notice

your remarks about the Engraving of the College & think with you that considering, we shall have a new Print of the College & grounds with Observatory, Gate, Lodge &c^a it would scarcely be worth while to go to expense of framing it, especialy as the title may be changed. With your kind permission I should prefer to retain the Photograph of your Son and his Lady. You will excuse haste.

Yours truly—

*

June 2^d 1864

Prof. John H Raymond L.L.D.

Dear Sir

In reply to your propositions in regard to your acceptance of the Presidency of Vassar Female College, I beg leave to say that we can accept your terms in all particulars save only that condition requiring me individually to guarantee further pecuniary provision for the College. I cannot persuade myself that it is necessary or proper for me to incur such extraordinary personal obligations, but we beg that you will reconsider the subject & conclude to give your invaluable services to our enterprize without insisting upon that condition. You may be assured that my pledges to appropriate nearly all of the residue of my Estate to the College at my death will be faithfully carried out, & that my efforts & means shall never be lacking during my life time to sustain & promote its best interests in such manner as will be satisfactory to the Trustees.

I remain, respectfully yours.

P S. I will here further remark also that the Ballance

of my Estate after deducting other Legacys & Bequests will not be *less* than some \$200,000 inuring to the College after my decease.

*

Rev^d. E. L. Magoon Kearsage House North Conway
N. H. 8th June

My dear Sir Your letter of the 4th Inst. states with substantial correctness the verbal agreement between us in regard to the purchase of your gallery of art. I am to have from you your entire collection as it is—complete—Art itself & all matters relating to art—descriptive historic & otherwise just as it is in your house as I regard all such matter printed & otherwise as making the completeness of your collection for my purposes which are illustrative & educational. We need no express contract—I rely upon you as a christian man.

In regard to payment—I wish it delivered first. The Building will not be in such a state as to warrant the placing of these articles any longer before the 1st of August than to enable you to hang them by that date. The payment of \$10,000 should therefore be made on that date. The balance we shall not disagree about as you leave the times for future payments much to my convenience. Meanwhile I think you will find much labor in packing & preparing for removal & in arranging them in place here. Besides as to the Catalogue it has occurred to me that for our purposes if you could add to your descriptive catalogue certain general outlines as to the artist himself it would be valuable. You will bear in mind that the most of our pupils will see & hear of Art & Artists for the first

time from this Collection & that therefore it is not to be assumed that they are already acquainted with facts quite patent to the world.

These Suggestions I have no doubt will meet with your entire concurrence and I trust I may hear from you that they do.

I hope you may gain all you desire during your trip and that you will be sure to be with us at our next meeting of Trustees.

Truly yours,

P. S. The Contractor will not give up the building before the 1st August.

*

June 8th 1864.

M^{rs} Sarah J. Hale

My dear Madame

Your letter of June 6th is under my notice. In regard to Mrs. Cuddehy I can do no more than call the attention of the President & Faculty Committee to her name & credentials in such a manner as will doubtless ensure her the most careful consideration at their hands. I place great reliance upon what you say in her behalf & I need not assure you she will not be overlooked.

In regard to Dr Jewett whatever statements may have appeared have not originated with me. Your Estimate of him is not far from the fact but it would be a very long and tedious & unwelcome task for me to go over the ground anew. It has been a most unhappy affair and I shall be glad to forget it for I wish him no harm. A recital of facts could only be to his disadvantage as well as a renewal of my own pain.

He certainly was not the personal friend to me that his conduct in my presence had led me to believe. He had labored deligintly to undermine my influence & that of my confidential Committee in the opinions of the Trustees. The Effect proved disastrous only to himself.

Dr Raymond has not yet signified any formal acceptance of the Presidency although I have great hope it will not be long delayed. He has for ten years been at the head of the Polytechnican & Collegiate Institute in Brooklyn, an Institution which he organized & has conducted with the most eminent Success. He was our unanimous choice. He is a clergyman, and a most enlightened & liberal Christian gentleman. He was the Companion of Henry Ward Beecher in his European travels & is his close friend although they belong to different denominations, Mr Raymond being a Baptist though I am informed not exactly concerning in some of their exclusive practices.

My own health is not such as to warrent me in much application to writing although the demand upon my time in that respect seem to increase.

Yours respectfully

*

June 9th 1864.

Miss Emma C. Church.

Dear Madame!

Your letter of May 21st has reached me. I had written you May 16th which you will doubtless have received by this time. You now propose that I send you the One half the Cost of the picture which is \$600 & also \$100 for frame and \$100 for getting it boxed

& on board ship at Leghorn. The last charge seems very high. Now as the picture is at Rome one would naturally expect it to be shipped at less Cost at Civita Vecchia. But I cannot at this distance direct & must leave the place of shipment, the mode & the vessel with you. I send you with this \$800 nett which covers your entire proposition leaving the balances to be arranged & our accounts to be stated in your next letter. You have an amount in your hands to be applied in our final settlement. I will remit you the final balance upon receiving the picture here in good order & on receiving your statement of amounts & comparing it with the figures which our books will show. You will please notify me by what vessel you send the picture & enclose the bill of lading at the earliest moment.

Our building will hardly be ready to receive the picture with safety before the 1st of October as we have had a variety of hindrances & the expenses are now enormous. But we are using every exertion to forward the enterprise. I have not been able up to this moment to make any enquiries in regard to placing your work on exhibition in N. Y. There will be time for that before its arrival.

Within the week past I have purchased the Gallery of Rev^d E. L. Magoon of Albany to place in the building—this is a new donation of \$20,000. I wish to make our Art Rooms a decided attraction at once with the hope of course that it may continue to grow in beauty, value & in educational and refining power.

In regard to the delivery of the picture on board vessel & the expenses I wish to refer you to my letter of Decbr 15th last in which I assumed the purchase

of this picture & which is the basis of the agreement between us.

I am glad to get the favorable opinions of the persons you mention as to this picture & shall be much gratified to meet Miss Hosmer whenever she shall revisit her native country.

I remain Yours truly

M. V.

June 17th, 1864.

My dear M^r Raymond,

I can hardly express to you my satisfaction at the receipt of yours of the 10 instant, which removes the last doubt & anxiety from my mind as to the assured success of our College. I am gratified that our recent interview has resulted in removing every doubt & obstacle from your path. You are most welcome to the position which is to reflect honor upon us both. So far as in me lies, it will be my highest satisfaction to sustain you & the enterprize which you are to guide. It is as you justly remark the favorite child of my age and to see it in the full career of success & usefulness will be the crowning pleasure of my life.

It will be quite important that before the meeting of the Trustees we have some consultation as to the business to be transacted & that you see the members of the Ex. Committee that all views may be understood & harmonised.

Awaiting such a meeting I am

Most truly yours,

M. Vassar.

*

July 15 1864.

Rev^d D^r E. L. Magoon.

My dear Sir. M^r Swan has just returned from your City & inform me that as you understand the Contract for your Gallery of Art with me to be thus, that you are to deliver it at your house and I am to pay for it as follows \$10000 Cash 1st August & notes for the balance with interest from the first of August to suit my convenience, after hearing M^r Swans statement of your understanding of the transactions I referred to my pocket memorandum Book for the first time since its entry & finds these words viz:

Friday June 30 1864

“ Rode to College with Magoon, Swan, Matthew &
“ Babcock on matters of Library Room & Art Gal-
“ lery—Promised to give Magoon \$20,000 for *all* his
“ complete collections of *Art*, he is first to send me a
“ Catalogue ” of them, then if approved I am to pay
“ him \$10000 Cash & \$10000 yearly payments
“ of \$1000 to suit my convenience with Interest after
“ the said Collection is delivered & put up under
“ Magoons Superintendence. This is the Gallery of
“ V. F. C.—only cost of putting up to be at my ex-
“ pense—Magoon takes the responsibility of save de-
“ livery to the College. Swan dined with us today.

Truly yours.

*

August 5 1864.

Rev^d E. L. Magoon DD.

Yours of the 3^d Inst. is before me and notice your progress in packing the cabinet pictures &c. We hope to have our Art Gallery room ready for their reception by the 20th Current if possible. Alltho' delays has occurred by reason of not being able to find competent persons to color the walls in fresco as suggested. Since the relinquishment of our late Contractor of his Contract, much time has been waisted in closing up details with him, and getting on a fresh Set of hands— We are now just beginning to move forwards again with the General Work. We shall be all ready *certainly* within the present month to arrange the Cabinet in place, and I shall have the first payment on hand on delivery in the College custody in your city as per agreement.

We are now being blessed with life living "Weather" "Springside" looks like herself again since the last rains. We have experienced the Severest drought I have Known in 40 years. All my ponds & pools of Water are dried up &c

Yours truly

*

Sept. 5th 1864.W^m S. Bird Esq^r

1 St. Swithins Villas,

Magdalen Road Norwich. England.

Dear Sir.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of August, and perused its contents with interest. You must be fully aware that I left England with my par-

ents when I was but a child, and that I have no Knowledge whatsoever of the large family connection that were left behind, neither have I through my long life had any intimation of this far stretched family link, and thus it can not be expected that I at this late period of my life should entertain any claim of relationships of so distant a character

I have in the mean time not the least doubt that the Statement you give is fully correct, but your application at this time and under such circumstances as I have placed myself, my fortune and my name shows an ignorance of facts that necessitates but few remarks to enlighten

Your allusion to my endowment to a female College indicates in the mean time that you are aware of that I am engaged in a benevolent Enterprize, for the completion of which I have pledged my means and my honor, and having provided for all my nearest Kindred that have followed me through life, it has for many years been my last cherished wish & hope to leave a memory behind me that could be an honor to my family name.

This last act of mine is the result of Industry, Perseverance and Self-reliance and neither Kindred nor friends have reached me an assistant hand. The road I have passed is open for all who will mould their character in honorable pursuits by the same means, and I speak this with special reference to the 2 boys you allude to, for neither relations nor influence can realize their future welfare but their own exertions and industry. With regard to the little girl I feel deeply interested and sympathetic with all her friends, but the statement I here have given I hope will be conclusive

that all applications even from family connections, is, at this advanced period of my life, entirely useless, as I am not in a position to render any service.

Had this application been made at an earlier stage of my life, it was not impossible that it would have received all the attention that I hitherto cheerfully rendered under similar circumstances, but for the present it has become my duty to deprive myself of the gratification it would afford me to comply with your request.

respectfully yours

M V.

P S. Since writing the above I have taken another day for consideration of your suggestions in relation to the younger female child Jessie and as there is a fund appropriated for beneficaeries under certain specialities it may be that she can be entered into the College under those provisions. You will therefore send me her Photograph likeness and a written history of her family in order that the Committee on application for pupilship can determine upon this special case.

Yours &c

*

Novbr 7. 1864

Miss Mary M^cKay

Corresponding Secretary Callisophia Society
Elmira Female College.

Your Communication informing me of the compliment paid me by this Society in the unanimous expression of their regard for the efforts I am making in behalf of women is before me and does not fail to afford me a very high degree of satisfaction. It cheers me

to be assured from such intelligent sources that you are ready to appreciate every endeavour made in the direction of the highest developement of your sex. My work more than my words evince the positive assurances of my own mind that the future of the individual woman and of the race are identical. I have desired to do all in my power or within my means for the elevation of humanity. It is to be done through woman. When she is elevated, educated, developed in all her capacities man cannot fall below her level. The day of unequal intellectual privileges for the Sexes has gone by. My own efforts will be followed from time to time until within the lifetime of some of you it will be forgotten that there ever was a debate as to the extent of the powers of the female world in any direction or as to the expediency of her developing that power to the fullest extent. It will be honor enough that I have contributed to the resolution of these questions in your favor and that my efforts were appreciated while I live

Please make my acknowledgements to the Society you represent and accept the regards of

Yours very truly.

*

Novbr. 21" 1864.

Rev^d E. L. Magoon DD.

Dear Sir

I was at the College last Saturday with Dr. Raymond and Mr Swan, and on going into the Art Gallery discovered that two of the Oil paintings (architectural interiors by Genison No 21 & 81 were covered with what we at first supposed to be a Species of dry mould, occasioned by dampness. Further ex-

amination convinced us otherwise as no other pictures (either Oil or water Colors) were semilarly effected—nor could the least Dampness be discovered on the books or even on loose paper lying about the floors.

The *Varnish* on these pictures seems to be destroyed, and crumbles under the touch to a white powder. That and two others (N^o 22 & 80) is cracked over the entire surface.

Can you account for these changes? We are awaiting to do anything to them untill we hear from you

Yours truly

*

Novbr 23^d 1864.

Rev^d. E. L. Magoon DD

My dear Sir I am sorry to trouble further about the pictures, and would not have done so had you not alluded to a supposed dampness by leakage in the roof which trifling leak you refered to was stop^d the day after your M. Foord left the College and immediatedly thereafter had a slow fire made & kept up in the Steam & Gass house which removed every vestige of dampness in the Art Gallery room.

There was another little matter I would not speak of at the time, but as a Second occurrence of the like has happened will now mention it so that you call M^r Foords attention to it—viz: 2 or 3 of the water colors pictures has fallen down, of course breaking the Glass, and otherwise injuring them—These accidents seem to be owing to the frames not being sufficiently nailed at the corners, the weight of others hanging upon them caused them to come apart & so tottled to the floor.

Please to mention this to M^r Foord and ask what can be done as others will follow Suit.

Yours in haste

M. V.

*

Decbr 25th 1864.

M^{rs} Sarah J. Hale

My dear Madame

Your two letters of the 22^d Inst. with the enclosure of a pleasant poem constituted an agreeable feature of this passing Christmas. They have both commanded my attention & as your letters must, have not failed to interest me. The unabated ardor & ability with which you pursue these questions in which the women of our day are almost unconsciously interested cannot fail of a high reward. In that respect we labor & exhaust ourselves for the same end. I pray that you at least may live to see some worthy result.

It is gratifying to be assured of your confidence in the gentleman upon whom devolves the serious task of organizing the interior life of this College. I am very sure he is bringing to the task large abilities & experience & a frank desire to do only that which shall best promote its interest, in which of course to a large degree are involved the interests of young women at large.

The domestic life of the young is not by any means to be neglected with us. It is the base from which every woman must reach to whatever may lie beyond—that at any rate—as much more as possible.

I am looking forward to the article you promise in your January N^o. I never fail to get instruction or con-

firmation or both from that source & these are very valuable to me.

Mrs. Cuddehy was indeed here recently & with Dr Raymond visited the College. Her stay was so short I had but a glance at her & no opportunity to form an acquaintance. Your opinion alone justifies me in believing her services to be of great value wherever she may be.

My health is at present but moderate & too much pen work goes very far to prostrate me. With my best wishes therefore for your health & prosperity I must be allowed to close. very truly yours

LETTERS OF 1865 TO 1868.

In the year of the opening of the college, there are, disappointingly enough, no letters from Mr. Vassar about the great event or about the work of the first months. The interest of the Founder in all the problems of the college continues keen and he writes about practical subjects like the heating apparatus and the times for vacations, proposes a uniform costume for the young ladies, advocates contests in public speaking and shows interest in the suffrage movement.

Little by little, however, he relinquishes all direct control of the college: writes that the President and the committee on Faculty are considering plan of organization and appointments; even resigns the chairmanship of the executive committee. Relieved of the onerous and detailed care of the institution, the Founder now begins to enjoy the reward of his labors in the devotion shown him by the early students of the college.

Two of the letters are addressed to students, several to trustees (Nathan Bishop, S. M. Buckingham and Samuel F. B. Morse, the inventor of the telegraph), others to persons whose names are already familiar,—President Raymond, Mrs. Hale.

Private

Janry 7 1865.

My dear Mrs. Hale

Your esteemed favor of the 3^d Inst. lays before me—your Kind expressions of sympathy for my late temporary illness is only another proof of your Kindness, I find language inadequate to express my feelings—next Summer I do hope you will honor me with a visit to see our “Noble Work” as you are pleased to term it, which will afford me an opportunity to renew my gratitude &c^a. It was entirely my fault that I omitted to comply with the terms for the “Ladys Book” and I do not blame any one for its stoppage—I now enclose \$3 for its renewal. I have read the Article on “Domestic Science” in this January No” and think the remarks just & true and fully accords with my views.

With regard to the Lithographing of V. F. C. sent you last fall—you could have “Jewett” and Raymonds” names pasted over with a Slip of paper substituting on them “Raymond over Jewett” and Henry Ward Beecher” over Raymonds. We have covered a number in this way—its easily & readily done. If you wait till next early summer we intend having ready a new Lithograph, embracing a more extensive views of the grounds, astronomical Observatory, Gass & Steam works, Gate Lodge &c^a. I also purpose to have my Photograph taken by some N. Y. City artist as I cannot get a good Likeness here, I will send you one of the first—therefore do not incur any expense these hard times.

I am pleased to hear you are taking so much interest in the charitable objects of the day I hope and pray you may be rewarded for it.

Longsight Crescent, 12th July.
My dear Doct. E. L. M.

Yours of last Saturday's date
came duly to hand, giving me an account of your sur-
prising to the place of your birth, you were more fortu-
nate than a certain Lady was when asked by a
gentleman the place of her nativity, who reply'd she
had none as she was the wife of a Methodist Minister!

But laying puns aside, we very much regretted
you and your good wife's absence from our society on the
evening of the C. Current, for we had really a happy joyous
time of it, — numbering some hundred & odd guests,
comprised of the Faculty, Prof^s, and Teachers of the College,
with our City (Alley) Trustees, and other notables, made up
a party of pleasant & social chat, seldom equalled for
literary distinction especially at the table of refreshment.

It was really a mental & physical feast, the latter was
got up by our best caterer for the inner man in our
City, so you see your "hope of our having a good time"
it had been realised.

Yours in the Grace &c.
M. Vassar

I again thank you for the deep solicitude you manifest for my health & welfare, and permit me to return you my grateful thanks with the Compliments of the Season.

“ A Happy New Year ”

Yours very truly &c^a

M V.

P S. 3 o'clock P M. The “ Mission Link ” just come to hand. The above named \$3 has been remitted a few days ago by my clerk.

*

Janry 7 1865

My dear M^{rs} Hale

For some months last past my thoughts have at intervals been occupied with the idea of adopting a uniformity of Costume for the pupils attending V. F. College—The object of which is first, to prevent jealousy which usually arise in the minds of young persons in the articles of Dress—Secondly to secure more comfort and convenience to them, while in School or at their playfull recreations. Your fertile mind will readily suggest what there should be—their make and material—something that will be desirable, least needfull of repeating washings repair &c^a, and to consist of something like the “ Bloomer Dress ” which would give freedom to their persons whether in School or out of School for exercise. Will you please to take this matter into considerations and at your early convenience inform me—Of course these garments are only for School house and need not be expensive so that they will be available to all the pupils—with those sugges-

tions, I am persuaded you can readily fill up the rest.

I remain Dear Madame

Yours very respectfully

Poughkeepsie January 14th 1865

Dear Mr. Raymond.

I finished reading your valued letter of the 9th current after my return from College a 2 o'ck this P. M. I made Amanda delay dinner till I had read it—from its date and reception I think it has been detained somewhere. The first paragraphs informed me that you had written me about Christmas, if so, it never came to hand and our wonder and conjectures are now revealed—lingering delays heighten our surmises & fears, a thousand conjectures intrude in such intervals, teeming with ominous forebodings—your letter before me relieves from all these. I heartily sympathise with you in the amount of time and valuable hours consumed in the little details of life which seem to amount to almost nothing yet allied to the little rivulets of nature they go to swell up the great ocean of existence, and were we without them our life w^{ld} be a non-entirety. I am much pleased with your remarks on the preliminary opening of the College if you ever receive my holiday letter you will find some thoughts running parallell with them. The interior official organisation I deem so important that I shall not be quietly at rest till the great agony is over, altho' it is greatly diminished by the action of you are pursuing in the premises in securing the services of such distinguished females as you have thus far visited or favorably appreciated.

I hope by all means you will satisfy yourself either by correspondence or personal interview with Miss Lyman of Montreal. I am quite shure that a Lady profesship in the *cullinary* department of the College would add much to its popularity, and I have lately met with a Germain Lady quite competent to fill the part.

Refering to Mr. Swan^s brief allusion to our late *trial* of the heating apparatus of the College which came off with so great success, I will send you a paragraph from the "Po' Press" by a gentleman who attended the *trial* if obtained in time for this day letter. Our Committee on the purchase of furniture & Bedding &c are preparing to leave home next week, they will visit N. York and Boston. &c

I thank you for the sympathy expressed in my behalf for the onerious dutys unavoidably imposed upon me in carrying forward our great enterprise, true they are at certain times very arduous, but I am thank God enjoying fair physical health, and hope it will continue till I have finish up the long cherrished object of my life & see it in successfull opperation. I am also well pleased with your suggestions concerning publication &c not to elaborate beforehand too lavishly, let our works gradually do this, we have an illustration of the mischief of this policy in some degree beginning to work in "Eastman" School," Many of the pupils are disappointed, he has not come up to his *flourishing circulars*, and some have gone home after a week or two trials. These things only invite criticisms and often jealousys, I am with you for doing things in a quiet way.

My special buizness to the College this morning was with reference to alterations in the Chapel Gallery,

lowring the balustrade in front The Foreman will make an estimate of the cost & we will determine tomorrow. I must now close this letter as I have many calls on business from tennants who enquiring about houses &c. &c. Amanda & Mr. Schow joins in their best regards to you & your good Lady & family.

Yours, very truly &c

M. Vassar

*

Janry 24" 1865.

Prof. Sam^l F. B. Morse LLD

My dear Sir

I received your letter of yesterday with an enclosed letter from Rev^d Lewis P. Clover repeating his application for a Professorhip in the College, and in regard thereto I may briefly remark, that said application together with a multitude of others, was in due time handed to the Chairman of the Committee on Faculty & Studies President Raymond, to be referred to again at the proper season before laying the same before the Board of Trustees for final decision.

The President in connection with said Committee is now engaged to investigate and complete a plan of Organization intended to be laid before the Trustees at their first meeting, and in conformity with said plan the proper Professor & Teachers will *then* be taken under consideration.

The address of D^r Magoon is "Rev^d E. L. Magoon DD Albany" and in connection with the position to which D^r Magoon stands to the Committee of Art, of which you are a member, I take this opportunity to reveal unto you a Suggestion that has met with an

unanimous approval of my friends and the friends of the College. The Art Gallery of the College lately purchased by me of Dr Magoon is now entirely put in the College Building and properly hung, and among this valuable collection we have a beautiful Oil Painting of the late Edward Everett which we have recently taken down from its first position on the Wall and transferred to the north End of the Gallery on the Side of the Oil picture of myself, and if I now could be so happy to prevail on you to donate to the College a Oil painting of yourself to be placed on the other Side of my picture, you would not only confer a personal favor on me, that I shall highly appreciate, but in time to come it would illustrate the american representatives of Science & Art that gave birth to my own inspirations of donating the whole results of my long lifes perseverance to the cultivation of Art & Science for Woman as well as for man.

Hoping to be favored with your reply I remain

Dear Sir

Truly yours

P S. President Raymond has just returned from a Tour West and intends to answer Rev^d Clovers letter to you.

*

February 6 1865.

Joel B. Germond

Care of W. White 186 Bowery near Spring N Y

Dear Sir The Vassar Female College will need by and by a good Time-Piece with double Dial plates which we propose on the Arch-way at the entrance (of the Gate Lodge) which Lodge is about 500 feet West

of the College. The Dials should be of sufficient size to be perfectly seen from the College, and so arranged as to be illuminated at night, something like your City Hall. The Gate Lodge being furnished with Gas will supply the light. At your convenience please to inform me if you can procure for us such a clock and at about what Cost. I scarcely need say that it must be a perfectly reliable timekeeper as all the movements of the College departments as to the hour of day & night will depend upon its accuracy.

Amanda joins in her best regards &c^a.

Yours

*

Poughkeepsie March 6 1865

M^{rs} Sarah J. Hale

Dear Madam

Your very kind favor of the 27th Ult^o. with enclosure of duplicate of a letter I addressed you on the 2^d April 64 upon the subject of changing the title of V. F. College, came duly to hand, but as President Raymond now is absent from the City, I must ask your indulgence for a definite answer to your questions untill his return, even then we should need the consent of our Board of Trustees, who do not meet till the Second Tuesday in April, which would make it too late for legislative action at this session, as they adjourn on the 1st April.

Allow me my dear Madam to return to you my hearty thanks for the deep interest you continue to take in this my last Enterprize (V. F. C.) for the benefit of woman and the generous encomiums you have so liberally bestowed upon me as the Founder of

an Institution for her moral and mental advancement, and now as you are the pioneer advocate for a change in the title of the College it would be exceedingly gratifying to me to have your opinion on another question equally novel, viz: The devision of School or College terms. It is proposed by some of our Trustees to divide the periods of tuition thus:

	months
To say—First Term from 1 st April to 1 st August	4
Second “ from 1 st Sept “ 20 th Decbr	4
Summer Vacation	1 ^{mo}
Winter “ Jan ^{ry} , Febr ^y , March 3 “	4

The advantages of this devision of time will allow the young ladies whose parents or guardians reside in the Country or rural districts to avail themselves of the long winter evenings assisting the pursuits in their household duties at home, studying their textbooks &c^a and making up new and repairing their own wardrobe, while the pupils of parents residing in Cities or large Towns and perhaps in better pecuniary circumstances will have the opportunity of doing the same and attend intellectual and polite entertainments usually held in large towns & places in the winter months—The College, as you are aware, is already provided in its arrangements for Winter conveniences by an extensive heating apparatus, so that it is not out of economical considerations that this change of School terms is suggested, but rather on account of health and comfort to its inmates, for it is the late fall & Winter Season in our clime that causes most of the maladies common to the northern latitudes and should we have a large share of them, the public would ascribe it to an unhealthy

location of the College, besides which extensive arrangements are made on the grounds for Gymnastical or athletical exercises in Summer and for the Study of Floral, Botany, Trees &c^a by *living existences*, these would be comparatively lost to pupils in the Winter Season. It is not, however our purpose to insist in the *entire dismissal* of all the pupils; such as have no parents or homes can remain, but the season of general Instruction ends at these severals terms and those that remain will only be required to pay simply board &c^a. I will not however extend these remarks, as your fertile mind will readily supply or detect, pro's or con's of these suggestions.

I will send you in a few days an article written by me some time since on the "Female Mind" but not thinking worth publication laid it aside, you can review it and make such disposal of it as you think proper.

I remain Dear M^{rs} Hale

Yours very truly

*

June 27th 1865.

Nathan Bishop LLD

My dear Sir

The first stage in the developement of that great enterprize to which I have devoted a large portion of my fortune and the latest labors of my life, is now drawing to a close. The erection of the College edifice and its equipments with the material apparatus of instruction will soon be completed and with the coming autumn, its interior life, as a great educational establishment will begin

Thus far the great work of the Executive Com-

mittee has been in a great measure, that of a Building Committee and I have cheerfully shared its perplexities & toils form a conviction that my long experience in the management of material affairs would enable me to give them important aid. Although a Kind Providence has blessed me with more than ordinary health and vigor for my years, yet I begin to feel sensibly the wear & tear of these numerous and ever-multiplying details, and since the business of the Executive Committee must hereafter pertain more than heretofore to the internal regulation of the College, I have felt a strong desire to be relieved by some gentlemen, who, to the general qualities of business capacity, high proficiency and practical Knowledge in the management of an Institution of learning.

With this view I have not only looked carefully over the list of our list of Trustees, but extended my view through the entire range of my acquaintance; and, among all within my reach or *beyond* my reach, I find no one who possesses those qualifications so immenently and so entirely as yourself, It is my desire, therefore, at the approaching meeting of the Board of Trustees, to resign my present place as chairman of the Executive Committee, and my earnest hope is that you will consent, to accept and discharge this honorable trust.

I have requested Pres. Raymond & our mutual friend Mr. Stephen Buckingham to be the bearers of this communication and to give any further explanation of my views (of which they are fully informed) that you may desire.

Meanwhile believe me dear Sir

M. V

*

July 6th 1865.My dear M^{rs} Hale

I have just received yours of the 2^d Inst. with a short notice of Doctor Raymonds "Prospectus" as published in the August N^o of the Lady's Book. It is quite to the purpose and needed no apology for its briefness. I am much pleased to have your approval of the Prospectus; the subject of change of Title to the College came up for discussion at the June meeting and was warmly debated and closely voted. Yeas 6 & Noes 7—and 7 out of the 20 members present declined to vote not having their minds made up. We shall carry our points at the next meeting of the Board. The non voters out of regard to the feelings of the Founder would have voted in the affirmative if he *specially desired them*, but not otherwise, until further persuaded of the propriety of the change—of course I would consent to no such compromise and thus the affair passeth off at the meeting.

I send you by this days mail 2 Copies of D^r Raymonds "Prospectus." We have already distributed some 2500 out of 3000 printed, a new Edition will be required in a few days. Applications for Scholarships are pouring in far and wide,—hundreds are calling at our Office for "permits" to visit the College, but the Ex Com. has suspended all indulgences of the Kind for the present, as the workmen are busy painting, cleaning, oiling the floors & getting in Furniture.

In another month or two all will be completed and then I hope you will do us the honor of a visit and write me a few days before, not that I shall or may be from

home, but that other engagements may not interfere. With my usual salutations of esteem. I remain.

Poughkeepsie

Saturday Morning

March 10, 1866

My dear Miss Dickinson

I am just in receipt of your kind note of yesterday morning handed me by your Treasurer M. V. Jun' to attend a social gathering at the College Chapel last evening to listen to a Shakesperian Reading by your President. It is a quaint saying that you cannot loose what you do not posses, but I do not believe from what I learn this Morning but I have lost that which I cannot regain very soon again by my absence.

Dont send your messages by old "Widdowers" there's no dependence on them while being surround—by so many College attraction. Miss Germond joins in these sentiments & sincere regards &c

Yours truly &c

M. Vassar

VASSAR FEMALE COLLEGE.

Sunday Evening 1866

To Miss Mary L. Gilbert. Cor. Sec. of the Students of
V. F. C.

My dear Madam

Words are impotent to express my feelings at the doings at your College to honor my Birth-day yesterday—to say that I was highly pleased would be a mea-

gre reply—In truth I now learn that the heart finds things which the power of language *cannot* express, and those things occurred yesterday—Please to accept my thanks for your kindness—The scene of which will never, no never, be obliterated from my Memory.

I remain Dear Miss G.

Yours truly &c. &c.

Matthew Vassar.

Thanksgiving Morning

November 29th 1866.

My dear Doct. Raymond L.L.D.

I regret exceedingly that I find my health such this morning from a bad cold and fever that I shall not be able to join the friends at the College to-day, which were it otherwise I would be most happy to do, especially as it being a day appointed and set apart by our National & State Magistrate^s as a Day of "Thanksgiving" for the many Mercies Conferred upon this people, and *We* should heartily join *our thanks* as a new Institution of Learning for *our* social, official and spiritual prosperity &c——Please to give my best regards to our dear young Ladies and Teachers, and say to them, that, I deeply regret that my health will not permit my joining them to-day, that I wanted to say to them, that, the "Vassar College" is now *thiers*, *thiers* to elevate, *thiers* to beautify, *thiers* to honor, and *thiers* to adorn, by its fruits, and I trust God in his Providence will bless, prosper and sustain it to the glory of his name, and to the praise and admiration of the world, and I hope therefore that all voices and hearts will

arise and join in one glorious anthem and Sing the *DOXOLOGY*, today.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, son, and Holy Ghost.

With my prayers for all your health^a and happiness
I remain Dear Sir
Yours very truly &c

M. Vassar.

N.B. You are at liberty to read this note to the Young Ladies &c if you choose.

M. V.

Poughkeepsie
February 5th '67

My dear Doct. Raymond

My health is such I can not come out to the College to see you, was it otherwise I could have communicated in half the time it has taken me to write this note.

I am engaged in making some additional Codicils to my Last *Will* and Testament, one of which is to set apart a specific sum the interest of which I purpose to applied to the encouragement of "Gifts or Talents" of the young Ladys pupils in public speaking—something in this way——During the Collegiate year there shall be *four* subjects announced for debate by the President, one every quarter of the School Session, to a class, say 10 pupils, whose names are previously entered & drawn by *Lot* from the whole number of pupils entering the Class, to be designated the "Vassar College" Offhand Speaking Society."

The President shall state the subject to be spoken an hour before the opening of the Meeting and *not before* and shall previously appoint judges, say 3 to determine the respective merits of each address according to the rules of Logic, giving to each pupil the reward of Merit in regular order—beginning at N^o. 1 to 10.

I have not mental stamina sufficient to enlarge this morning ?What think you of the plan.

Bye the Bye have you seen the “ Bill ” changing the name of our College. I have wrote Mrs. Hale and sent her a duplicate of the Act.

Yours very Respectfully &c. &c.

M. Vassar.

P. S. M^{rs} Germand is better so says D^r Hervey who has left in this moment.

M. V.

August 2^d 1867

Doct. Nathan Bishop L.L.D

My dear Sir

Some time ago I called your attention as Chairman of the Ex. Board of Trustees of “ Vassar College ” to a suggestion made by me of the propriety of the latter furnishing at their own expense thier respective half lenght potraits for to be hung up in the Art-Gallery, and more especialy do I *desire* this in as much as my Likeness in Oil & soon will be added the Marble Bust, and then perhaps a Bronse Statute,—a lavish expenditure I think of Vanity, & that without a Single member of eithur Board to indorse or sustain me in it! Will you please to lay this matter before your Ex.

Committee at your next Meeting. I intended to have Spoken to you yesterday on this subject, but other matters engrossed my thoughts I forgot it &c—besides I was rather out of tune in point of health &c

Yours truly, &c

M. Vassar—

Setember 9th 1867

My dear Mrs Hale

I am duly in receipt of your favor of the 2^d current and were right glad once more to hear from my good and tried friend, and especialy under the circumstances of improved health from her late tour for its restoration &c. Refering to the Advertisement notice respecting the College requested by our Register M^r Schow, declining to make any charges for its publication in the Lady'-Book, only imposes upon me a fresh debt of gratitude, but which I hope to have an opportunity at no distant day to remunerate at least in part.

I read your article in the Sep^t No "Catalouge of "Vassar College" for 1866-7, and shall be anxiously waiting y^r October November issue. I send you by Am Express Co another Copy of Vassar College & its Founder to present to your friends in England—a singular coincidence just ocured on the very morning of the day of receipt of your last letter the central marble slab on the front of the Edifice containing the word "Female" was removed—relieving the Institution from the odium which has so long disgraced it &c It now reads

—Vassar College—
Founded A. D. 1861.

and let me assure you that to you my dear friend and to you only am I indebted for this change after so long a contest by a phalanx of opposers.

Poughkeepsie December. 12th 1867.

My dear Doct. E. L. M.

Yours of last Saturday^s date came duly to hand, giving me an account of your surjournalings to the place of your birth,—you were more fortunate than a certain Lady was when asked by a gentleman the place of *her nativity*, who reply! O she *had none* as she was the wife of a *Methodist Minister!*

But laying puns asside, we very much regretted you and you good wife' absence from our sociable on the evening of the 6th current, for we had realy a happy joyfull time of it,—numbering some hundred & odd guests, composed of the Faculty, Prof^s, and Teachers of the College, with our City (College) Trustees, and other notables, made up a party of pleasentry & social chat,—seldom equaled for literary distinction *especialy* at the *tables of refreshments*, It was realy a mental & physical feast, the latter was got up by our best caterers for the inner-man in our City,—so you see your “ hopes of our having a good time ” of it has been reilised.

Yours in the Traces &c &c,

M. Vassar

Poughkeepsie

December 18th 1867.

To the honorable Committe appointed to Inspect the
minature Statute of the Founder of Vassar Col-
lege &c.

Gentlemen.

As the incipient steps are now taken for the erection of the monumental statute of your Founder &c, by Mrs. Laura S. Hofmann Artist, either in Marble or Bronse, I would suggest that in case your committee should decide to cause a devise in either that, if possible, that the work be executed by an American Expert, and that the same be proceeded with immediately, and that it be ereted in the center of the College Avenue between the Gate-Lodge and College Edifice as in your judgement may deem best, and in case the work should be begun this ensuing spring, I would loan the College on the first of May on thier B & Mortgage @ 7 pc payable half yearly to pay for the monument or a part thereof the sum of Twenty five Thousand dollars.

Yours very Respectfully

M. Vassar.

December 19th 1867.

Samuel M. Buckingham Esq^r

My dear Sir

As you are one of the committee appointed by the Ex. Bord of Vassar College to inspect a Statuette of the Founder of the Institution moulded by Mrs Laura S. Hofmann as a study for a larger work to be made of Marble or Bronse, I would beg to submit to you a few thoughts with referance to that important work, but before proceeding allow me to express, that, it was

never my wish or desire to have the latter work executed during my life time, whatever the Hon. Board of Trustees might deem proper to do thereafter, but as the artist has undertaken on her own responsibility to execute a miniature Modell in clay and now proposes to transfir the same in Plaster for a full sise statute, it becomes extremely important that it should be artistically done, so as to bear the vigilant scrutiny of the best connoisseurs in the Art &c, I therefore feel extremely anxious, that, every measure be taken by the Committee to secure that end, as sepulchral, (or for the living) monuments, are either erected as expressions of love or veneration by those who delight to linger over departed worth, or as testimonials of gratitude to the living as values of thier usefullness in furnishing excitement to virtue and well doing, in either view the statue proposed to be erected in honor of the Founder of Vassar College will fully express the utillity designed by your Committe, I have no doubt, and should the Com- proceed this autum or ensuing Spring with the work, and require the neccesary Means so to do, I will agree to loan the College on B & Mortgage, a sum sufficent to erect the same, on the 1st May next, Interest payable Semi-Annually.

Yours very Respectfully

M. Vassar.

Tuesday Morning

April 28th 1868

My dear Miss Powell

I received last evening by the hands of a col^d Boy your note of yesterday^s date, and were glad to hear that you and all the other Young ladies of the College were

pleased with Miss Dickinson Lecture last evening¹ and before I had passed the Gate-Lodge after leaving the Observatory I was sorry we had not remained to hear the Lecture,—notwithstanding my deafness, as her *address & manners* I could have discerned and after all that *goes far* with our sex.

The subject of “Womans Suffrage” or “Idiot^s and Women”, was correctly quoted from the Law^s granting the right of them to the ballot Box, and when I first read the Law some years ago I was equally surprised to find our Fair sex placed in so shamefull category as “criminals, paupers, Idiots &c,” which if the Law was right by this Classification I think it is full time that my 300 Daughters at “Vassar” knew it, and applied the remedy.

The truth is it is all *nonsense* and irreconcilible with Divine truth in regard to the Mental Capacity of Woman, nothing but long prejudice with the dominating spirit of Man has kept Woman from occupying a higher elevation in literature & art, but mans *tyrany* & jealousy, and wilfull usurpation of her normal rights &c.

Excuse these hasly writtin remarks with many interruptions while waiting for my Carriage to go to the College

Yours very truly &c

M. Vassar.

Poughkeepsie June 10th 1868.

John H. Raymond L.L.D.

My dear Doctor

Yours of yesterday Enclosing a letter from our old friend & Trustee Col. Morgan L. Smith is received, and read, and as you remark “contains some sentences

¹ Saturday evening.

doubtless intended for my *Ear*^s,—but which I do not fully comprehend, but as far as I do are not view^d by me in that light,—my maxim or motto is now the same as at the beginning of our enterprise—*Do all things, Interlecturall and Material the best, and make your prices accordingly.*—The idea that “during the *infancy* of the College to *court* public patronage by catering to *cheap* or *low prices* of *instruction* is to my mind ridiculous.—I go for the *best* means cost what they may & corresponding prices for tuition in return.—Suppose we raised the terms (altho’ I would not as a whole) only on the *ornamental branches*, do you suppose the College would be *relieved* of *Pupils*.—*Nay, not a wit*, I am therefore for giving the Daughters of the public the *very best Means* of Education, and make *them pay for it!*

I will stake my reputation on the result,—The *best* article in Market always meets with the most readiest and quickest Sale, and as a general rule pays the largest profit!

I dont believe in erecting a “Monument” to my everlasting Shame by a failure in Judgement in its conductment &c—

I think well of “Advertising” and I have advocated already & put fresh means in progress through the journals of the day calculated to secure that object, viz, the notoriety of our Institution, but nevertheless there is room in the secular papers in the Country as the Co^l says, for more extensive circulation,—as my Carrage is at the Door waiting to take me to “Springside” must close these remarks &c

Yours very truly &c

M., Vassar



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MATTHEW VASSAR AND HIS DOG
From an old Ambrotype

Poughkeepsie June 11th 1868

Professor Ch^s. S. Farrar

Dear Sir

Enclosed please to find accompanying this note 42 Continental currency Bills of different valuations amounting to some £206.500 with \$31²⁵/₁₀₀ New York & Spanish currenry, which I were presented with last Evening by Mrs. Sarah Robinson & Miss Martha Forbes for the use of the Vassar College. Time is gradually wearing away these *land Marks* of by-gone *days* & therefore the importance of preserving the scanty few in some of our public Archives,—You will please to give them a place in Vassar.

Your^s Respectfully &c

M. Vassar.

LETTERS TO SARAH L. STILLSON
MAY 8', 66
TO
MAY 4, '67.

A Group of Letters written to Miss Sarah L. Stillson, between May 8, '66 and May 4, '67.

The happiness which the Founder received from the honor and devotion shown him by the students of Vassar College is vividly expressed in the letters written to Sarah L. Stillson while she was a student in college and afterwards. As the occasion of the beginning of this correspondence was the "Hill-Top Idyl" written by Miss Stillson for the first Founder's Day, the little pamphlet containing the poem is reproduced before the letters.

HILL-TOP IDYL

FOUNDER'S DAY

To honor the Founder of "Vassar College" "the Faculty voted that the anniversary of his birthday be entered on the calendar as a holiday to be celebrated with appropriate commemorative exercises."

The design was that this should be made the Students' Day, and that the young ladies should offer such a tribute to Mr. Vassar as should express their sense of the value of his gift and their own respect and affection for him as the Founder of the College.

Accordingly the arrangements and preparations for the day were made by the young ladies, and the "Founder's Day", was most happily inaugurated. A procession of some three to four hundred students met Mr. Vassar, accompanied by the President, (Dr. Raymond,) at the entrance of the Gate Lodge—a song of welcome greeted him at the College—appropriate literary exercises were held in the Chapel, and a collation in the Dining-Hall; and a reception in the College Parlors, in the presence of the pupils and numerous invited guests to participate in the festivities, completed the exercises of the occasion.

The literary proceedings consisted of a salutatory by Miss Bush, of Turin, N. Y., an essay by Miss Palmer, of Detroit, Michigan—subject, "The World's Advance,"—five dramatic recitations, representing woman in different ages of the world; a poem by Miss Stillson, of Nunda, N. Y.,—subject, "Hill-Top Idyl,"—and a Floral Drama by Miss Braddock, one of the teachers. Thus ended the exercises on this interesting evening—inaugurated by the young ladies in commemoration of the Founder's Birth; and so quiet and still were the preparations made that the Founder had no knowledge whatever of it until the day arrived—Monday, 30th April, 1866.

The following is the poem of the evening:

HILL-TOP IDYL

Nature loves holiday: Tired winds delay with dally-
ing streams,
And sometimes January's heart is haunted by Spring
dreams.

Youth's feet cannot plod heavy on in spondees all its days:

'Tis health to step to dactyl rhythm while Joy her schottisch plays,

Merrily tripping, while music is rippling, foot-beat and heart-beat in rhyme,

Soul-thrilling chorus so sweet pealing o'er us, that voices ring, hearts sing in chime.

He who'd advise all serious life as well might seek to train

Cupid to teach us logarithms,—to bloom with flowers the main.

So hail we all this festal day, day in commemoration
Of him who reared these walls to bless the future of
our nation.

Dawn kissed the Catskills, whose calm face smiled
blushing back on Dawn,

So, beauty-bathed, the jealous stars had one by one
withdrawn:

A band of girls on "Sunset Hill" watched for the
coming day,

They tho't they heard a far strange sound, and then
a still voice say:—

"I'm Guardian Genius of the place. Look! where
yon College stands,

Five years ago no structure vast showed work of
builders' hands;

The herdsman's whistle might be heard, or cattle's
distant low:

A great mind's Thought begets a Deed,—what greets
the vision now?

One philanthropic soul was stirred to elevate your
race,
To open Wisdom's gates to give Columbia's daughters
place.
Men praised the work: its Founder said, 'Give me
not now the praise—
'Tis but a soulless form as yet—'twill speak in future
days.'
They gathered in from distant homes, from cities scat-
tered wide,
Where rice fields wave, where north winds sweep,
where west streams roll their tide,
Until the structure woke to life. Lights from the win-
dows gleamed;
With voices rang the corridors that with earnest young
life teemed;
And still, 'Not yet,' the Founder said,—'when
women you shall see
Go forth to bless when I am gone, then shall my tri-
umph be.'

But tell me what you think of all, and who your lead-
ers are."
So we described and spoke of each, singling out star
by star,
Whose blended lights will guide us oft when hence we
wander far—¹
Of him ² whose brain and heart so blend, as twilight
blends with day,
We see not where the one begins, the other ceases
sway,—

¹ The Faculty and Teachers.

² Dr. Raymond. .

Of him who teaches numbers ³ and their subtle secrets
keeps,—
Of him, Nature's true votary,⁴ who reads Earth's
mystic deeps,—
Of her whose wisdom guiding well ⁵ doth wield an in-
fluence far,—
Of her who knows the distant heavens,⁶ follows the
trackless star,—
Of him who speaks in many tongues ⁷ with nations o'er
the sea,
And brings the classic ages back from their deep
mystery,—
Of him who treats of eloquence,⁸ and all its sweet con-
trol,—
Her who explains the human form,⁹ strange casket of
the soul,—
Of those who train by art and song ¹⁰ to love the Beau-
tiful,—
Of teachers rare, whose deep true worth we ne'er can
prize too well,—
Our College Home! It is a spot where Truth and
Wisdom dwell!
In honor of the Founder, we shall have a gala day,
When trees almost in leaf and flow'r, and when 'tis
almost May,
Our thoughts, alas! being scarce half bloom'd, inspire
us what to say.

The Voice replied, "'Tis meet, glad maids, in honor
of his name,

³ Prof. Farrar.

⁴ Prof. Tenney.

⁵ Miss Lyman.

⁶ Miss Mitchell.

⁷ Prof. Knapp.

⁸ Prof. Buckham.

⁹ Miss Avery.

¹⁰ Profs. Wiebe and Van Ingen.

That you should have a festal day for debt you owe
to him,
For you are by life's fount, and hear its cataracts far
away
That blending with that ripple's fall are a lulling melody;
But he has passed life's rapids, lo! their foam is on his
hair,
And the blinding spray has dimmed his eye from the
sea that draweth near.
What you should write, I scarce can tell: your daily
influence preaches
Far louder sermons day by day than all your silvery
speeches.
Talk not on 'Woman's Rights:' Be right, and leave
the praise to men.
But hark! the corridor breakfast bells are ringing out
again.
On those disheveled locks all eyes' reproving glance
will fall,
If tardy, or with lingering steps you thread that dining-hall:
'Twere poetry on Sunset Hill to watch day's rosy flash,
But poetry and prose in life do sometimes sadly clash.
So hence, as you must practice o'er today the 'Founder's Greeting:' "
"Or, more important," added one, "attend committee meeting.
Nay Guardian Spirit, 'tis but dawn, 'twas only rising bell,
Phoebus has not joined his steeds above the gold-crowned hill,
So of this College prophesy the future destiny."

"Students, the answer yours," it said; "'tis left for you to say:

'Tis a grand interrogation-point before the world to-day;

And so, 'to be or not to be, that is the question,' then,
Whether you'll rise in mental height to regions most divine,

Or, leaving Minerva's temple gates, offer on Fashion's shrine.

If the last, your verdict then will be—your verdict
and the world's,

That Curtiss' 'goddesses,' alas! are only common girls.

You'll wander forth from the Founder's halls, but
each one of your band,

Tho' little, keeps (O sacred trust!) his honor in her hand.

Live not for self; live for your age, the future, and to God;

Thus each a gem in his shining crown, when he sleeps
beneath the sod.

Despise no humble mission, overlooking lowly worth,
The bow that crowns the heaven begins and ends its arch on earth.

Toil on! up Wisdom's starry heights, faint not in aspiration;

Your best achievement will be but his life—dream's incarnation,

And Vassar College stand thro' time an honor to the Nation."

Poughkeepsie
Tuesday May 8th 1866

My dear Miss Stilson

I was favor'^d with a Copy of your pretty little poem deliver^d on the occasion of the "Founder^s day" or Festival in Commemoration of his Birth-day April 30th 1866, and have perused it over and over, and cannot express my feelings at the present moment for this little gem of your poetic genius——

Please to accept my best thanks till oppertunity offer^s to do better.

I am Dear Miss S.
Yours truly &c
M. Vassar

"Springside"
June 18th 1866.

My dear Miss Stillson

The printer (M. Osborn) of your beautiful little gem composition "*Hilltop Idyl*" was dilivered me (200) copies on saturday evening, but too late to send them to you—I forward the same this morning by the "College post Boy"

I think you will be pleased with the typographical & mechanical executions. I only regret their tedious delay, I trust you will meet with ready patronage in this first effort for literaly fame.

I remain dear Miss S—
Your friend &c
Matthew Vassar

P. S. I have retained 25 copies for distribution among my friends

Thursday Evening

My dear Miss Stilson

I received your^s of the 11th inst, appologising for your and other pupils at "Vassar" in *not seeming* civil at the parting on Saturday Eves PicNic at "Springside". I assure you my dear Miss S. that was *no fault* of yours or your companions, I noticed your *intentions* while *passing* the *door* of my Cottage, but your good Lady Principal Miss L. fancied *I was tired* and beconied your *advance* while *I* would have been glad to have taken each of *you* by the hand, had an opportunity offered.

I am pleased to think you all enjoyed the repast &c, Truly a Kind Providence greatly favor^d us in the weather, the day was charming, so were all the *sorroundings* &c. I feel *sad* to think how we shall separate, perhaps some us *forever*. Good bye my dear friend for to-day, I hope to meet you on *Commencement Week*.

Yours very truly &c &c

Matthew Vassar

June 13, 1867 (date penciled on envelope).

VASSAR COLLEGE

Poughkeepsie, N. Y. September 5th 1867

My dear Miss Stilson.

I am just in receipt of your kind note of the 31st ultimo, redeeming your long looked for promise to write me, which of course I had been axiously waiting, but the long delay inferentialy left the impression, that you were sick, or time and other occupations had obliterated me from your memory—however your in-

teresting Letter lying before me has relieved all these forbodings, and I am happy to hear that you are well and succeeding so prosperously with your School at Martinsburgh. I pray that our Heavenly Father may Continue to bless your enterprise and that you will return to "Vassar" again next Spring.

Extensive improvements have been made in the interior of the College, in the Lodging departments, for the accomodation of 50 more pupils. Also in the intriduction of more light and Air in the first Story Rooms in rear of the Corridors. The finishing off 25 Rooms for Instruction on Piano^s, and using the old rooms in the College Building for Lodging apartments—We can now accommodate 400 pupils with good comfortable sleeping apartments—The number of Pupils already registered for Sept. term is some 360, and in another week or two we shall have the full complement.

Some few changes has taken place in the officers of our Institution, or rather in the Professorships—among those are Professor Knapp and Prof^r Weibe, the former & Lady has gone to Europe, the latter to Holy Yoke Seminary. We have their places ably supplied. We have expended some \$15,000 in alterations & other improvements in the College buildings for the convenience & comfort of its Pupils, &c.

I send you by "Am" Express Co." a work entitled "Vassar College & its Founder" by Benson J. Lossing which is the first Copy I have given away to any Pupil of "Vassar", also the last Catalouge" please to accept the same from your sincere friend, also Miss Lymans New Term address to the Parants & Pupils—My Coachman is waiting on the door and I

must close this note, with my best wishes for your
health & happiness &c

Yours truly

M. Vassar

Springside, Po

September 26th, 1867

My dear Miss Stilson,

I was put duly in receipt of your kind letter of the 23^d current, and was suprised to learn at *first* thought that you had not received "V College & its Founder" but on the second thought, there was a very good and sattisfactory reason, viz, I had omitted to mail it &c, dispa^{ct}^d it yesterday which will be at hand ere this note.

I herewith send you on other side as per request the Certificate sought, and hope it will prove sattisfactory and accomplish your purpose. Our College is filling up fast—we have now entered on the Books some 370, pupils, all goes on well, I am happy to hear that your School prospects are so flattering. We have this summer added more gymnastics & other physical Exercises, the latter large Riding School Building, two 9 Pin-Alleys,—Not feeling very bright this Morning I must make this note brief.

Yours very Respectfully &c

Matthew Vassar

City of Poughkeepsie N. Y.

September 26th 1867

To whom it may concern &c.

The bearer of this note Miss Sarah L. Stilson has been a pupil of "Vassar College" for the last two

years past, and as far as I understand from the principals of the educational departments has acquitted herself with creditable testimonies and good character.

Matthew Vassar
Founder of Vassar College

Oct. 18. 1867

My dear Miss Stilson

Right glad I were to receive a note from you under date of the 12th current, acknowledging the safe receipt of "V. C. & its Founder". I began to have fears that like several others sent by the "American Express Company" had failed to reach its destination, I am also happy to hear you were pleased with the work.

If the particulars I gave you of the late opening of the College were "interesting" to you I am happy & amply paid for writing it, as nothing gives me more pleasure than to please my *College Children*, and like yourself when I fall to thinking about our absent ones I wish them all back again, but as you remark "this is a "Working world" and have all of us "wings & must expect some will "fly away", like the *Dove* in olden times with the emblem of invitation to return with safety to its green pastures &c.

I rode out to the College yesterday—a lovely day, Saw many of your old Schoolmates, they were glad to hear from you through me, some were walking, Riding, Rowing, and some rolling 10 Pins in the New Ball Alley opened yesterday in the Gymnasium Building—on the south side in Basement—one Alley on either side 100 feet long. Room Lighted nights with

Gass, heated with Steam, many practice evenings & 150 pupils have enrolled their names. It is much liked as a physical exercise, and that you know is my great object "Physical Exercise".

I hope my dear Miss S. you will find it to your Convenience to return to the College soon.

I remain truly Yours

M. Vassar.

Poughkeepsie

December 10th 1867

My dear Miss Stilson.

Your^s. of the 6th current with "Hill Top" Institute enclosed is received, and were happy to hear from you once again, and have perused over your letter with much pleasure, altho' you mentiond it was written under pressure of many heavy demands on your time, yet I did not discover it by its autography or Composition but contrawise, both had improved.

Your reminiscences of the pleasure^s you enjoyed at the little festival entertainment afforded at Springside last summer were fully ballanced & reciprocated by me on that occasion, by meeting so many of the Young Ladies of the College—I have again and again, of late participated & enjoyed those pleasent season^s—First on the last Thanksgiving day, I dined at the College, & in the Evening had a social gathering in the Parlors—on the 3^d. Dec the Annual Festival of the Philalethian Society came off, then on the 6th (Friday Evening) we held a sociable Entertainment at my Domicil (city Residence) of the Faculty, Professors, & Lady Teachers, of "Vassar", with several of the

Trustees & Executive Committee, numbering over a hundred Guests, with a choice N. Y. City Band of Music. At 11. Ock. we all partook of a fine supper got up by the Celebrated Caterers "Smith Brothers" of this City. This was the first Invitation ever extended to the College Faculty & Lady Teachers, since its organization & I think was highly appreciated and will be long remembered—Miss Lyman was absent having recently lost her Sister, in Philadelphia—

We have lately had several distinguish^d Lecturers at our College among them Rev^d. Newman Hall of England, Wendell Phillips, Vincent & others.

The weather is now very cold and we have fine skating at College Lake, a *little* snow but *no sleighing*.

I remain Dear Miss Stilson

truly Yours &c

M. . Vassar.

VASSAR FEMALE COLLEGE

Poughkeepsie, N. Y., May 4th 1867

My dear Miss Stilson

I feel disappointed & grived to think I have not seen you within speakable distance so long a time but circumstances of a personal nature has prevented, Of course I *saw you*, saw your sweet lips move, heard the sound of your melodious voice on the Anniversary Evening, but that^s all, did not hear one word *distinctedly*, I think I saw you once in the Corrodors or refreshment room, however be that as it may, I have just finished reading your "Colloquy" so kindly sent me yesterday on the "Triumph of Progress"—a Composition

worthy of the claims of more matured and older intellects, but where are they in "Vassar College" &c to be found.

Excuse briefly—the doorBell Rings, &c.

Y^{rs} truly,

M. Vassar

APPENDIX

Books from Matthew Vassar's Library.¹

- "Analectic Magazine." Philadelphia, 1817. v. 9-10.
 "Monthly Repository and Library of Entertaining Knowledge." New York, 1831. v. 1.
 Nicholson, William.
 British Encyclopedia. American edition. Philadelphia, 1819-21.
 12 v.
 "Penny Magazine of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge." London, 1832-36, 1840. v. 1-5, 9.
 Buck, Charles.
 "Theological Dictionary." Philadelphia, 1823.
 Chambers, Robert.
 "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation." New York, 1846.
 "The Holy Bible." New York, 1820.
 Todd, John.
 "The Bible Companion." Philadelphia, 1842.
 "Scripture Text-Book." New York, 1846.
 "The Book of Psalms." New York, 1857.
 Jones, Henry.
 "Principles of Interpreting the Prophecies." New York, 1837.
 Keith, Alexander.
 "The Evidence of Prophecy." New York. n. d.
 Strong, James.
 "New Harmony and Exposition of the Gospels." New York, 1852.
 Fleetwood, John.
 "Life of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." New York, 1822.
 Goodhue, J. A.
 "The Crucible; or, Tests of a Regenerate State." Boston, 1860.
 Welby, Horace.
 "Mysteries of Life, Death, and Futurity." New York, 1863.
 Bush, George.
 "Anastasis." New York and London, 1845.
 Belsham, Thomas.
 "A Summary View of the Evidence and Practical Importance of the Christian Revelation." Boston, 1808.
 Hartley, David.
 "Of the Truth of the Christian Religion." Boston, 1808.
 Jenyns, Soame, and Others.
 "Infidelity." New York. n. d.
 M'Ilvaine, Charles P.
 "Evidences of Christianity." Philadelphia, 1859.

¹ These books were originally incorporated in the Vassar College Library, but have since been taken out, as they have been found and put in a separate collection. There may be others yet to be added.

- Smith, John P.
 "Relations Between the Holy Scriptures and Some Parts of Geological science." London, 1848.
- Mathews, J. M.
 "The Bible and Men of Learning." New York, 1855.
- Hervey, James.
 "Meditations and Contemplations." New York, 1822.
- Doddridge, Philip.
 "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." Northampton, 1804.
- Williams, Mrs.
 "Religion at Home." Providence, 1837.
- Ramsey, William.
 "The Drunkard's Doom." Philadelphia, 1845.
 "Manual of Christian Psalmody." Boston, 1832.
 "The Psalmist: a New Collection of Hymns for the Use of Baptist Churches." Philadelphia, 1848.
- Jay, William.
 "Morning Exercises for the Closet." Baltimore, 1834.
- Law, William.
 "Call to Christians." Philadelphia, 1851.
- Williams, William R.
 "Religious Progress." Boston, 1850.
- Chalmers, Thomas.
 "Application of Christianity to the Commercial and Ordinary Affairs of Life." New York, 1821.
- Dwight, Timothy.
 "Sermons." New Haven, 1828. 2 v.
- Wayland, Francis.
 "University Sermons." Sermons delivered in the chapel of Brown University. Boston, 1849.
- Howitt, William.
 "History of Priestcraft." New York, 1857.
- Knowles, James D.
 "Memoir of Mrs. Ann H. Judson." Boston, 1829.
- Wayland, Francis.
 "Memoir of the Life and Labors of Rev. Adoniram Judson." Boston, 1853. 2 v.
- Jones, William.
 "History of the Christian Church." New York, 1824. 2 v.
- Mosheim, Johann L. von.
 "Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern." New York, 1821. 4 v.
- Merle d'Aubigné, Jean H.
 "History of the Great Reformation of the Sixteenth Century." New York, 1846. 4 v.
- Morris, J. W.
 "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Rev. Andrew Fuller." Boston, 1830.
- Cochrane, James, ed.
 "Protestant's Manual." Edinburgh, 1839.
- Sparks, Jared.
 "Letters on the Ministry, Ritual, and Doctrines of the Protestant Episcopal Church." Baltimore, 1820.

- Belsham, Thomas.
 "Vindication of Certain Passages in a Discourse on Occasion of the Death of Dr. Priestley." Boston, 1809.
- Davis, Andrew J.
 "Great Harmonia." Boston, 1851. 2 v.
 "The World in a Pocket Book." Philadelphia, 1845.
- Sidney, Algernon.
 "Discourses on Government." New York, 1805. 3 v.
 New York (state) Legislature.
 "Manual." '61 and '63. Albany, 1861, 1863. 2 v.
- Raymond, Daniel.
 "Thoughts on Political Economy." Baltimore, 1820.
- Smith, Adam.
 "Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations." Philadelphia, 1796. 3 v.
- Hamilton, Alexander.
 "The Federalist." Philadelphia, 1818.
- New York (state) Constitution Convention, 1821.
 Reports of the Proceedings and Debates. Albany, 1821.
- Beadle, Delos W.
 "The American Lawyer and Business Man's Form Book." New York, 1855.
- "The Damathat; or, The Laws of Menoo," translated from the Burmese. Maulmain, 1847.
- Coppee, Henry.
 "Academic Fallacies." Philadelphia, 1859. (Presentation copy from the author.)
- Columbia College.
 Catalogue of the Governors, Trustees, and Officers, and of the Alumni and Other Graduates, 1754-1864. New York, 1865.
- United States Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce (Department of Commerce).
 . . . The Foreign Commerce and Navigation of the United States, 1858. Washington, 1859.
- "Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review." New York, 1839-48. v. 1-40, 43.
- "Annual of Scientific Discovery." Boston, 1850.
- Miller, Hugh.
 "Footprints of the Creator." Boston, 1850.
- Van Amringe, William F.
 "Investigation of the Theories of the Natural History of Man." New York, 1848.
- "Mechanics' Magazine and Register of Inventions and Improvements." New York, 1833-36. v. 1-8. --- ---
- Moore, George.
 "Health, Disease, and Remedy." New York, 1850.
- Youmans, Edward L.
 "Hand-book of Household Science." New York, 1857.
- Ewbank, Thomas.
 "Descriptive and Historical Account of Hydraulic and other Machines for Raising Water." New York, 1851.
- New York State Agricultural Society.
 Transactions, 1843, 1861. Albany, 1844, 1862.

- Cole, S. W.
 "The American Fruit Book." Boston, 1849.
- Fessenden, Thomas G.
 "New American Gardener." Boston, 1828.
- Bridgeman, Thomas.
 "Young Gardener's Assistant." New York, 1844. 3 v. in 1.
- Youatt, William and Martin, W. C. L.
 "Cattle." New York, 1851.
- Miner, T. B.
 "American Bee-keeper's Manual." New York, 1849.
- Downing, Andrew J.
 "Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening."
 New York, 1844.
- Johnson, Louisa.
 "Every Lady Her Own Flower Gardener." Charleston, 1842.
- Leuchars, Robert B.
 "Practical Treatise on the Construction, Heating, and Ventilation
 of Hot-houses." Boston, 1851.
- Cleaveland, Henry W. and others.
 "Villages and Farm Cottages." New York, 1856.
- Downing, Andrew J.
 "Cottage Residences." New York, 1860.
- Walker, John.
 "Critical Pronouncing Dictionary and Expositor of the English
 Language." Pocket edition. Hartford, 1831.
- Locke, John.
 "Conduct of the Understanding," by John Locke [and] "Essays,
 Moral, Economical, Political," by Lord Bacon. New York, 1823.
- Butler, Samuel.
 "Hudibras." Baltimore, 1812.
- Milton, John.
 "Poetical Works." Philadelphia, 1821. 2 v.
- Shakespeare, William.
 "Dramatic Works." New York, 1823. 10 v.
- Addison, Joseph.
 "Works." New York, 1811. 6 v.
- Addison, Joseph.
 "Spectator." New York, 1803. 8 v.
- Burns, Robert.
 "Works." Philadelphia, 1801. 4 v.
- Cowper, William.
 "Poems." New York, 1814-16. 3 v.
- Goldsmith, Oliver.
 "Miscellaneous Works." New York, 1809. 6 v.
- Goldsmith, Oliver.
 "Poems." New York, 1820.
- "Letters of Junius." New York, 1821. 2 v.
- Sterne, Laurence.
 "Works." New York, 1813. 6 v.
- Wolcott, John.
 "Works of Peter Pindar." Boston, 1811. 4 v.
- Bloomfield, Robert.
 "Poems." New York, 1821.

- Coleridge, Samuel T.
 "Literary Remains." New York, 1853.
- Pollok, Robert.
 "Course of Time." Boston, 1829.
- Cervantes.
 "History and Adventures of Don Quixote." New York, 1814.
 4 v.
- Sedgwick, Catherine M.
 "Letters from Abroad to Kindred at Home." New York, 1842.
 2 v.
- Durbin, John P.
 "Observations in Europe, Principally in France and Great Britain." New York, 1844. v. 1.
- Tripp, Alonzo.
 "Crests from the Ocean-World; or, Experiences in a Voyage to Europe." Boston, 1862.
- Plutarch.
 "Plutarch's Lives." Philadelphia, 1822. 4 v.
- Hume, David.
 "History of England." Philadelphia, 1821-22. 9 v.
- Robinson, John.
 "Hume and Smollet's Celebrated History of England," abridged.
 Hartford, 1831.
- Macaulay, Thomas B.
 "History of England." New York, 1849. 2 v.
- Post Office London Directory, 1847. London, 1846.
- Lacey, Henry.
 "Pictorial Liverpool" . . . a new and complete handbook. Edinburgh, n. d.
- "Views of Edinburgh, &c." Edinburgh, n. d.
- O'Meara, Barry E.
 "Napoleon in Exile." Boston, 1823. 2 v.
- Robertson, Hume.
 "Impartial History of the Life of Napoleon Bonaparte." Philadelphia, 1808.
- Ventouillac, L. T.
 "Paris and Its Environs as Displayed in a Series of Picturesque Views." London, 1829.
- Coglan, Francis.
 "Handbook for Italy." London, 1845.
- Gillespie, William M.
 "Rome as Seen by a New Yorker in 1843-44." New York, 1845.
- Gurowski, Adam.
 "Russia as It Is." New York, 1854.
- Sinding, Paul C.
 "History of Scandinavia." New York, 1858.
- Malcom, Howard.
 "Travels in Southeastern Asia." Boston, 1839. v. 2.
- Cheetham, James.
 "Life of Thomas Paine." New York, 1809.
- Paine, Thomas.
 "Political Writings," New York, 1830. 2 v.
- Thomas, Ebenezer S.
 "Reminiscences of the Last Sixty-five Years." Hartford, 1840. v. 2.

- Kemble, Mrs. Francis A.
 "Journal." Philadelphia, 1835. 2 v.
- Davison, G. M.
 "Traveller's Guide Through the Middle and Northern States and the Provinces of Canada." Saratoga Springs, 1837.
- Mitchell, Samuel A.
 "Accompaniment to Mitchell's Reference and Distance Map of the United States." Philadelphia, 1834.
- Tanner, Henry S.
 "American Traveller." New York, 1844.
- Blake, John L., ed.
 "A History of the American Revolution." New York, 1844.
- Pitkin, Timothy.
 "Political and Civil History of the United States." New Haven 1828. 2 v.
- Carey, Matthew.
 "Olive Branch." Philadelphia, 1818.
- "History of the American War of 1812." Philadelphia, 1817.
- Gordon, Thomas F.
 "Gazetteer of the State of New York." Philadelphia, 1836.
- Hammond, Jabez D.
 "History of Political Parties in New York." Albany, 1842. 2 v.
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